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A TREATISE OF THE SINNE AGAINST THE HOLY GHOST.

OR

A CAVEAT FOR SINners, and Glaſſe for the Godleſſe, warning them to take *heed of the ſteps to death, and hell beneath.*

Neceſſary and profitable, eſpecially for all prophane, wicked and impenitent liuers, proud ſpeakers, and railers, that they may learne not to blaſpheme in theſe times, wherein the light *of the ſpirit is moſt clearely manifeſted.*

Grounded vpon the words of Chriſt, *Luk.*12.10. *Vnto him that ſhall blaſpheme the Holy Ghoſt, it ſhall not be forgiuen.*

LONDON,

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To the right Honourable ſir *Thomas Egerton* Knight, Lord Elleſmere *Lord Chauncellour of* England.

RIght Honourable; I do not forget your Lordſhippes ſpeech, the laſt time I was bolde to preſent you with my poore and vnwoorthie Labours, that you could wiſh men would ſpend more time in Study, and leſſe in Writing, which your Lordſhips ſaying, though (I muſt confeſſe) I did commend in my mind, as moſt truely and rightly conceiued, in regard of theſe Times, wherein Books are multiplied of al ſorts, and many are forward to write, who had more neede to learne; yet did it cauſe in me a feare for

the time, ſuſpecting my owne weakeneſſe and admiring your Honours perfection. Notwithſtanding, ſince receiuing by your Lordſhippes good fauour ſome benefite, I thought it my duety to teſtifie my thankefulneſſe, ne could I otherwiſe but in this poore ſort: hoping therfore your Lordſhip will accept it, not according to the price thereof, but according to the gentlenes of your noble nature, I moſt humbly reſt

At your Lordſhips ſeruice,

H. HODDESDON.

To the Reader.

Gentle Reader, I haue ſent thee heretofore two Bookes, the one of the death and reſurrection of the body, of the death which is common to all, and reſurrection which is certaine, and not to be doubted of any. The other of loue, which the booke of God, and all holy writers doe ſay, is the ſumme of all that is commanded, as the very common Path-way that leadeth to ſaluation. I ſend thee now a booke to warne thee to take heed of the contrary, that is, of the way which leadeth to deſtruction, which is, the ſinne and blaſphemy againſt the Holy Ghoſt, and whatſoeuer

ſoeuer may be an occaſion and cauſe of it. I trouble thee not with bookes of controuerſie, whereof there are ſufficient, yea more then need, to him that will vnderſtand: for alas what comfort is it to thee, to heare others iangle about the way, when it is more then time, thou diddeſt know it perfectly, that thou mayeſt walke in it? I would rather exhort thee that of the Apoſtle, 1. Tim. 6. 5. vaine diſputations of men of corrupt mindes, and deſtitute of the truth auoid, or from ſuch ſeparate thy ſelfe; eſpecially when they feare not to blaſpheme, or ſpeake euill of them that be in dignity: which bitter fruits, and vnſeaſoned, declare they are not of the right Spirit, ne haue learned Chriſt truely, or the way to heauen, and ſo conſequently cannot direct others vnto it. Such ſtarres follow not, for they are like vnto thoſe S. Iude

Iude *describes*, *which hee saith are*, Errantia sydera quibus procella tenebrarum seruata est in æternum, *wandring starres to whom the mist of darknesse is reserued for euer. Study thou knowledge for thy selfe out of the booke of God, which as S.* Paul *saith, is able to make thee wise vnto saluation: or if not, there is nothing else that can do it: for as one saith excellently well,* Ratio humana cum non regitur verbo Dei facile deerrat, *Mans reason when it is not guided by the word of God, it easily erreth: And as it was said of the Philosophers, and wise Heathen, there is nothing so absurd, which some of the Philosophers haue not auouched & maintained. So may it bee said of our profound wise Clarkes, and deep-learned Papists and Catholiques, as they terme themselues, there is nothing to bee thought*

thought ſo falſe, or ſo horrible, which they of late haue not beene ready to defend, and not content therewith, like raging waues of the ſea, which ſome out their owne ſhame, they raile openly, and blaſpheme, ſo that now their madneſſe is manifeſted, & he may be thought very ſimple, that either taketh them to be Saints, or is deceiued by them. I warne thee therefore not to bee like them; and to that end I commend vnto thee the reading of this litle booke, by the helpe whereof I hope thou ſhalt bee the better inſtructed to decline from the things which otherwiſe are moſt perilous. Read therefore, I beſeech thee, and the Lord giue thee a good vnderſtanding in all things.

The

A Table of the chiefe Contents of this Booke.

First, an exposition of the words of Christ, Luk. 12. 10. *Vnto him that shal blaspheme the Holy Ghost, it shall not bee forgiuen.*

Of foure principall points, the first whereof is the diuers opinions of holy Writers concerning this sinne against the Holy Ghost, where is shewed that there are sixe kindes of sin, which some haue thought to bee this sinne, their errour therein, and the reason or causes thereof.

Of two notes and obseruations vpon that point.

The second principall point is, by what

what degrees and means a man is brought by the Diuell to commit it, where is ſhewed, that there are ſeuen ſteps and ſtaires of it.

Of two notes and obſeruations vpon that point.

The third principall point, is the ſignes of this ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, which are ſhewed to be ſeuen.

Of two notes and obſeruations vpon that point.

The fourth principal point it is the meanes wherby we may auoid it, where fiue ſpeciall vertues are commended in that kinde.

Of two notes and obſeruations vpon that point.

The Concluſion.

To all Sober-minded Papiſts, the Author wiſheth true zeale, according to knowledge, and charity, out of a pure heart, and a good conſcience vnfeigned.

Sober-minded I call you, putting difference betweene you, and others of your Sect, mad in my ſeeming: For though in your Religion, there are diuerſe vnreaſonable and ſenceleſſe Opinions, as that the word of God is not, Totalis regula fidei ſed partialis, *The rule of faith in whole but in part, as* Bellarmine *ſaith, that* Panis in Euchariſtia mutatur in corpus Chriſti; *that the bread in the Euchariſt is tranſubſtantiate, which very ſence knoweth to bee falſe:*

that Leges humanæ obligant conſcientiam ſimpliciter & per ſe extra contemptum, *That mens Lawes bind the conſcience ſimply, and of themſelues without contempt*, Quod imagines colendæ ſunt adoratione diuina: *That Images are to be worſhipped with Diuine adoration, againſt the Scripture it ſelfe*, Quod calix in Euchariſtia non eſt Laicis communicandus, *that the cup in the Euchariſt is not to be cõmunicated or giuen to Lay perſons, contrary to the expreſſe words of Chriſt*, Drinke yee all of this: *and ſuch like, yet theſe are old errours, and now by long vſe may not bee thought ſo ſtrange: but theſe new vpſtart Opinions concerning Equiuocation, and Lying, and Forſwearing, and Railing againſt them that bee in dignity, and deuiſing of miſchiefes and murders ſecretly,*

ſecretly, theſe I ſay are ſo abſurd, and as yet ſo odious vnto all men indifferent, thāt either yee do not, or would not (I thinke) ſeeme to mainetaine or defend them: Vnto you therefore I ſpeake, as vnto thoſe who haue not altogether broken the bonds of all ſhame and modeſty, as others of your Profeſſion more outragious wicked proud ſpeakers haue: Yee therefore vnderſtand that wee beleeue in Ieſus Chriſt, and hope to bee ſaued through him aſwell as yee; and if in any thing wee differ from you, it is in this chiefly, or in this as the cauſe of all the reſt, of all other differences betweene vs, that wee would follow Chriſt purely, according to his Goſpell and will, and (I would wee did follow him as wee profeſſe) not regarding any other doctrine whatſoeuer, which cannot bee ſhewed plainely and infallibly

out of the booke of God, which is the onely ground and rule of our conſcience and faith, in matter of ſaluation. Now wherein doe yee complaine (forſooth) that wee will not ſubmit our ſelues, our neckes vnder the Popes obedience, to follow him euen as wee are led, which to do were meere madneſſe, as I take it, hauing ſo certaine a guide and light, vnto the which we ought to take heed, as S. Peter *teſtifieth,* 2. Pet. 1. 19. *For that the Primacy of the Pope is neceſſarily to be beleeued, ſo as without it wee cannot bee ſaued, that this Article of your faith is contained in the Scriptures, wee ſay as a moſt reuerend Biſhop hath of late written, there is neede of faith as much as to moue a Mountaine: Why then if it be ſo, or if wee cannot be otherwiſe perſwaded, by any meanes, our conſciences being iudge before God, who knoweth*

knoweth the hearts. Iudge yee ſo-ber-minded Papiſts, what cauſe ye haue to perſecute our King, and in him vs, and to reuile him, and our louing Queene before him, now dead: What, or how vntameable an euill is your tongues, or how is it ſet on fire euen of hell it ſelfe, as S. Iames *ſaith, that when as the Lord hath and doth preſerue them, ſo as you can not hurt them, maugre your ſpight, yee I meane, your Profeſſours, and the Pope in whom yee truſt, bid yet ſmite with the tongue, and contemne them that are in dignity, and by the Law of God ought to be honoured: Forbeare vs, if not for the loue yee owe vs, which is vnſatiable cruelty, and thirſting after our bloud, who pray daily for your conuerſion, and hurt yee not, except it be in our owne de-fence, and for the ſafety of our Realme and liues in danger by you,*

yet for your owne ſakes, that yee be not of poſterities, and of all the world, accompted the moſt cruell Saints that euer liued, and the moſt treacherous: And if yee cannot renounce your errors, vnto the which yee are tied ouer-faſt with a ſelfe-liking, make conſcience to do hurt vnto them who are men of your owne likeneſſe, of like Profeſſion in the chiefe foundation which is Ieſus Chriſt, and of like conſcience and deſire to be ſaued, though not of like cruelty and ſpight, God forbid if wee cannot doe one another good, neither wee you, nor you vs, by conuerting the one the other, as wee would: Let vs abhorre to ſay wee meane good, and the glory of God, and ſaluation of ſoules, when we ſpill bloud, and ſeek the liues of thoſe, who when they might deſtroy, ſuffer vs to liue in quiet. Or if your nature be ſo bad, or Religion

ſo ſtrange, or practiſe ſo diueliſh, that your minds are altogether ſet vpon miſchiefe, as we haue no other hope of you after ſo long a time of forbearance and clemency vſed, what remaineth, but that accor- to the law of Nature and of Nati- ons, and according to the rule of Iu- ſtice, of Religion and Conſcience: Wee all with one conſent moſt hum- bly pray, that our Soueraigne would vſe his authority to the vttermoſt, and turne the wheele ouer you, and either baniſh you far from vs, or kill you as vipers, according to the ſaying of the Heathen man, whoſe ſentence I thinke toucheth you in this caſe: Neminem vnquam veſtrum vipera momordit neque phalangium et abſit vt mordeat vnquam, ſed tamen cuiſmodi animalia vbi conſperitis, mox interficitis: itidem & cum delatorem, et crudelem, & hominem

Cicero morat contra Ariſtog.

nem videritis vipermam habere naturam, ne exſpectate, donec aliquem veſtrum mordeat, ſed cum primum occurrerit puniatur.

A TREATISE OF THE SINNE against the Holy *Ghoſt*.

LVK. 12. 10.

Vnto him that ſhall blaſpheme the Holy Ghoſt, it ſhall not be forgiuen.

OVr Sauiour Chriſt a little before had taught his Diſciples not to bee afraid of men, but conſtantly and boldly to confeſſe him, ſhewing that if they confeſſe him, hee will confeſſe them, and if they deny him, hee will deny them: and to make thē the more wary not to offend in this kinde, hee fore-

warnes them of the danger which is great, if they deny him; to wit, that it is a fault which shall hardly or neuer bee forgiuen: *Hee that speaketh* (saith hee) *a word against the sonne of man*, (that is, against him as beeing compassed with infirmity, not knowing him, as S. *Paul* saith the Princes of the world did not, 1. *Cor.* 2. 8.) *this it shall be forgiuen*: *But* (saith he) *vnto him that shall blaspheme the Holy Ghost, it shall not bee forgiuen.* That is, he that shall deny him, euen against the testimony of the Holy Ghost in his heart against his owne knowledge and conscience, it shall not be forgiuen him. These words then are a most fearefull commination and threat of no forgiuenesse vnto him that sinnes against the Holy Ghost.

1 The partes are three; First, the
2 sinne, which is to blaspheme the ho-
3 ly Ghost: Secondly, the threat, it shall not bee forgiuen: Thirdly, the case of the party that doth commit it, which is a desparate feare and horrour of the vengeance to come.

Vnto

Vnto him that ſhall blaſpheme the Holy Ghoſt it ſhal not be forgiuen. βλασφημησαντι, *to him that ſhall blaſpheme* τὸ ἅγιον πνευμα, *the holy Ghoſt.* To blaſpheme it is to ſpeake euill, and there are diuers kindes of euill ſpeaking, as to ſay a man is a traytor, a thiefe, a villaine, a murtherer, a buſie body, a medler with other mens matters, a trifler, a foole, a rude and vnmannerly perſon, a lyar, and ſuch like; but blaſphemy is an euill ſpeaking in the higheſt degree, and againſt the higheſt. In the higheſt degree, *Reuel.* 16. *vlt.* *Blaſphemauerunt homines*, men blaſphemed: men blaſphemed, to wit, with rage and full purpoſe of heart, and they blaſphemed him that is in dignity, *blaſphemant maieſtatem*, *Iude* 8. euen the higheſt dignity, euen God. There is a double blaſphemy of God: the one, when wee name him vainly, and by way of curſing and abuſe: ſo it is ſaid the Iſraelitiſh woman blaſphemed & curſed, *Leu.* 24. 11. The other, when we charge God fooliſhly, as who ſay he is vniuſt, or

What it is to blaſpheme, & the diuers kindes of blaſphemy.

vntrue. *Iob.* 1. 22. ſaith the Holy Ghoſt, *Iob* did not charge God, that is, he did not offend this way, in anger or ſorrow, raſhly and inconſiderately to blaſpheme or ſpeake euill of his name. And this kinde of blaſphemy directly againſt God, it is either in thought, or in word, in thought, *Pſa.* 50. 21. *Thou thoughteſt wickedly, that I am ſuch a one as thy ſelfe.* In word, as when wee giue that to another, which is proper onely to God: ſo the Phariſes ſaid Chriſt blaſphemed, when he forgaue ſins, which none but God could doe, *Mark.* 2. 7. or when we deny God, *Iude* 4. or ſpeake falſely of him, that hee is vntrue, make him a liar. 1 *Ioh.* 5. 10. or vniuſt. *Mal.* 3. 13. or ſuch like. The name of God is blaſphemed three waies; either in himſelfe, in his word, or in his Saints. In himſelfe, *Rom.* 2. 24. ſaith the Apoſtle to the Iews, *The name of God is blaſphemed among the Gentiles, through you.* In his word, *Titus* 2. 5. the Apoſtle ſaith, that *yong women ſhould be good and ſubiect to their husbands*

husbands, that the word of God bee not blaſphemed, or euill ſpoken of. Laſtly, in his Saints, *Iames* 2. 7. *Nonne blaſphemant nomen Dei, quod inuocatum eſt ſuper vos. Do they not blaſpheme the worthy name after which yee be called.* Blaſphemy againſt the name of God deſerues death, *Leuit.* 24. 16. *Hee that blaſphemeth the name of God, ſhall dye the death. Math.* 26. 65. ſaith the high Prieſt; *yee haue heard his blaſphemy, what thinke yee? They ſaid, he is worthy to dye.* Blaſphemy againſt the word of God ſhall haue a ſeuere puniſhment, as may appeare, *Math.* 10. 14 15. *Whoſoeuer ſhall not receiue your words* (ſaith our Sauiour Chriſt) *when yee depart out of that houſe or City, ſhake off the duſt off your feet: verily I ſay vnto you, it ſhall bee eaſier for Sodome and Gomorrah in the day of iudgement then for that Citty.* Finally, blaſphemy againſt the Saints of God ſhall not eſcape vnpuniſhed: for ſo our Sauiour ſignifieth, *Math.* 18. 6. *Whoſoeuer ſhall offend one of theſe little ones which beleeue in mee, it were better for*

him that a mil-ſtone were hanged about his necke, and that hee were drowned in the ſea. Vnto him then that ſhall blaſpheme either againſt God, or his word, or his Saints, doth belong a fearefull puniſhment: But as our Sauiour Chriſt ſaith, *Math.*12.31. *Euery ſinne and blaſphemy ſhall bee forgiuen vnto men*, to wit, if they repent, for ſo one ſaith: *Omne peccatum per penitentiam accipiet indulgentiam*, euery ſin ſhall through repentance receiue pardon and forgiueneſſe: *But the ſin and blaſphemy of the holy Ghoſt ſhall not be forgiuen*, no not by repentãce: for it is impoſſible they that ſo ſin ſhould be renewed againe by repentance, as the Author to the *Hebrews* teſtifieth, 6.6. *Vnto him that ſhall blaſpheme the Holy Ghoſt*: he that blaſphemeth the Father, blaſphemeth the Sonne, and blaſphemeth the holy Ghoſt: for theſe three are one, as S. *Iohn* ſaith: 1. *Iohn.*5.7. the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghoſt: how then doth our Sauiour ſay, *that all ſins and blaſphemies ſhal be forgiuen, but the blaſphemy*

my againſt the holy Ghoſt? as who ſay, there is a blaſphemy which is not againſt the Holy Ghoſt: ſo it is plaine in this verſe, *whoſoeuer ſhall ſpeake a word againſt the ſonne of Man, it ſhall be forgiuen, but vnto him that ſhall blaſpheme the Holy Ghoſt, it ſhall not be forgiuen.* I anſwere, that though the Father, the Sonne, and the Holy Ghoſt bee one God, and worke together in one and the ſame action continually, yet are they diſtinct in perſon, & vnto each perſon diſtinctly is giuen a ſeuerall and diſtinct operation: vnto the Father the worke of the Creation, vnto the Sonne the worke of Redemption, & vnto the Holy Ghoſt the worke of Sanctification: to blaſpheme the Father thē, it is for want of knowledge to deny him, and to ſay there is no God that made the world, or will iudge the ſame; and ſo conſequently to liue as without God in the world, *Epheſ.*2.12. To blaſpheme the Son it is through ignorance to deny that he came into the world, 1. *Iohn.*

What it is to blaſpheme the Holy Ghoſt.

4.3. and ſo conſequently not to beleeue in him, nor obey his Goſpell and will. But to blaſpheme the Holy Ghoſt, it is of purpoſe to ſpeake againſt that light and knowledge which hee hath giuen vs, and by the which hee would ſanctifie and ſaue vs: this the Apoſtle S. *Paul* calles the *quenching of the Spirit*, 1. *Theſſ.* 5. 19. Saint *Stephen*, *the reſiſting of the Holy Ghoſt*, *Act.* 7. 51. And the Author to the *Hebrewes* calleth it *a deſpite vnto the Spirit of grace*, *Heb.* 10. 29. that is, when the Holy Ghoſt giueth vs to know the meanes whereby we muſt be ſaued, either in reſpect of Faith or good workes, we will not acknowledge it, nor walke according vnto it, but oppugne it, euen againſt our knowledge, and walke frowardly, *Leuit*, 26. 21. as they that are vnwilling to bee ſaued: the Spirit would ſaue vs, but wee will not bee ſaued. This it is to ſinne againſt the Holy Ghoſt, that is, euen againſt our conſcience directly in word or fact, to oppugne that without the which we cannot

cannot be ſaued.

But here we muſt note, that euery oppugning of a truth euen againſt conſcience, euery blaſphemy againſt knowledge is not a ſinne againſt the Holy Ghoſt, vnleſſe it bee in that which is principally neceſſary vnto ſaluation, that is, in the Articles of our faith, either one, or all: for though it bee a ſin to ſpeake againſt that we know to be true, euen in our heart & conſcience, yet if that thing be not an Article of faith principally neceſſary vnto ſaluation, it is not of that nature, the ſinne againſt the Holy Ghoſt is: which muſt bee an oppugning of that manifeſt and cleare truth, by the knowledge whereof we muſt be ſaued, and cannot without it: for as if a man were ſicke vnto the death, and no medicine but one wold ſaue his life, which though hee know to bee ſoueraigne euen to heale him, and no other, yet he doth deny and refuſe to take it. This man cannot bee reſtored, cannot be healed. No more can he, who knowing how

1. Note.

how, and by what meanes hee muſt be ſaued, and that there is no other meanes elſe, if hee will not acknowledge that meanes, but deny the ſame, he cannot be ſaued; and as we ſay in matter of faith, ſo ſay wee alſo in matter of practiſe, if wee knowe what to doe, without the doing whereof we cannot be ſaued, if wee will not doe it, but the contrary, euen againſt conſcience, there can be no ſaluation vnto vs. This is the firſt thing then to be noted, that it be not an oppugning of euery known truth, but of that onely which is ſo neceſſary, as that without it wee cannot be ſaued.

2. Note. A ſecond thing is this, that it bee not onely an oppugning of ſuch a truth, ſo neceſſary as I haue ſaid, and againſt conſcience alſo, but of malice, and with a heart hardened, not to repent of it, for there may be a reuolt from the faith, or a turning from righteouſneſſe to ſinne, either in ſome particular, or generally in all, which may happen through infirmity,

firmity, or feare, or raſhneſſe and inconſideration, which afterward may repent againe, as *Peter* did, *Matth.* 26. 75. But to deny the faith, and to turne backe to Sathan. 1. *Tim.* 5. 15. with a purpoſe not to turne againe, neuer to repent of it: this it is to ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, at the leaſt ſo farre and neere as man may iudge: for ſtrictly to ſay and determine of this ſinne, what it is, none but God alone can doe that. Wee take not therefore vpon vs to define fully and perfectly indeed of this ſinne, as if we could iudge of it our ſelues, or ſhew how others may iudge of it infallibly indeed; ne can we ſay how any one may iudge of it in himſelfe: for as one ſaith, *De quo deſperauimus ſubito conuertitur:* ſometimes when we deſpaire vtterly of a man, he ſuddenly, euen againſt all hope and expectation, turnes vnto God: yea, when a man deſpaires in himſelfe for a time, hee doth againe recouer hope, and is turned afterward, and becomes another man: it is hard therefore

therefore to define and determine this point; but notwithstanding leauing that is secret vnto God, that is, the infallible determination of this sinne, we may with sobriety speake what we thinke is true in this kinde, and to be feared; and as farre as wee can iudge, this very sin indeed, and that is this, and no other thing but the same which the wise man toucheth, *Wisd.* 17.10. where he saith, *It is a fearefull thing when malice is condemned by her owne testimony, and a conscience that is fearefull, doth euer forecast cruell things.* Where wee haue two notes of this sinne, both fearefull: the one is a conscience of malice & peruersenesse, which doth make vs vtterly vncapable of grace and repentance, whether it be by Apostacy from the truth against conscience, and with hardnesse of heart, and obstinacy after deliberation, or by impiety of life, with full resolution to cast off feare, and neuer to turne vnto God, but to walke frowardly all our life.

The first note of this great sinne, a conscience of malice, which doth make vs vncapable of grace and repẽtance

For

For the firſt, Apoſtacy from the truth, this is that which the Author to the *Hebrewes* doth intimatee to be this very ſin, as may appeare by that marke he ſets vpon it, αδυνατον παλιν ανακαινιζειν εις μετανοιαν, it is vnpoſſible that ſuch ſhould be renued againe by repentance. But here wee muſt note, that this Apoſtacy, which is of this nature, it muſt be againſt knowledge not ignorantly, and with deliberation and continuance, not raſhly, or of infirmity, againſt knowledge, not ignorantly; for otherwiſe wee ſhall ſay that *Paul* committed this ſinne, who perſecuted the Church of Chriſt; and as he ſpeaketh of himſelfe, was a blaſphemer, a perſecutour, and an oppreſſour: but as hee ſaith, 1. *Tim.* 1. 13. αγνοων εποιησα εν απιστια, *I did it ignorantly, through vnbelieſe*, as if hee ſhould haue ſaid, if I had done it of knowledge, there had beene little or no hope of mercy. Againe, if it be done with knowledge, yet if it be of raſhneſſe & inconſideration, and of feare and infirmity, it

is

is not to bee ſaid, this ſinne againſt the Holy Ghoſt: for otherwiſe *Peter* wee know did deny Chriſt, euen againſt his knowledge, and promiſe, notwithſtanding after, when hee did ſeriouſly conſider what he had done, he repented and found mercy; And this I take to be the proper forme & eſſentiall difference of this ſinne of Apoſtacy, which is againſt the Holy Ghoſt, after it is committed of knowledge, and againſt conſcience, and we come to a ſerious conſideration of the ſame, if then we continue in it, with hardneſſe of heart, not repenting, as *Peter* did not, nor any that euer we read that obtained mercy, that for Apoſtacy or deniall, or abiuration of the truth, whereby we hope to bee ſaued, and cannot without it.

Now for impiety of life, the greateſt may be forgiuen: *Manaſſes*, that ſhed exceeding much innocent bloud, 2. *King*. 21. 16. or the thiefe, who all his life liued wickedly, *Luk*. 23. 32. But when notwithſtanding admonition giuen

giuen and deliberation, a man goeth on ſtill in his wickedneſſe, and will not turne, but reſolues ſo to liue and dye, hauing his conſcience ſeared with a hot Iron, 1. *Tim.* 4.2. ſeared, whereby (as an ancient father ſaith) is vnderſtood, *Obſtinatio in malo*, a hardening of the heart in euill, and with a hot Iron, whereby is ſignified *Ardor malignitatis & concupiſcentiæ*, a loue of wickedneſſe and ſinne. This it is the ſtate of them who the Apoſtle ſaith, *Eph.*4.19. are απηλγηκοτες, *are paſt feeling*, that is, paſt repentance, paſt grace, paſt hope of mercy, that is, it is that wickedneſſe which the Holy Ghoſt cannot abide, and from the which hee flieth, *Wiſd.* 1. 5. and will not bee entreated to turne againe.

Vnto him that ſhall blaſpheme the Holy Ghoſt. The word blaſphemy ſignifieth an euill ſaying, a ſinne in word, not in fact: not that this ſinne againſt the Holy Ghoſt is committed in word onely, but in heart and in fact alſo: for God knoweth the heart,

heart, *Luk.* 16.15. and the conſent of the heart makes the ſinne, (according to that of our Sauiour Chriſt, *Matth.* 5.28. *Whoſoeuer looketh on a woman to luſt after her, hath committed adultery with her*) but it is ſeene and ſhewed both in the words and in the workes: therefore our Sauiour Chriſt ſaith, *Matth.* 12.37. *By thy words thou ſhalt bee iuſtified, and by thy words thou ſhalt be condemned*: yet not by thy words only, but by thy works alſo. For as the Apoſtle ſaith, *Rom.* 2.6. *Hee will reward euery man according to his workes*; but both theſe, the words and the workes ſhall bee iudged and condemned according to the heart, and the affection thereof, which God ſeeth, and not man; for this is the treaſury whence good or euill doth proceede, *Math.* 12.35. which hee ſeeth, who ſhall either iuſtifie or condemne, *Luk.* 16.15.

Vnto him that ſhall blaſpheme the Holy Ghoſt. The blaſphemy of the Holy Ghoſt is a word ſpoken in malice from a heart obdurate againſt that

that light and illumination of the ſpirit, whereby we muſt be ſaued, as was the blaſphemy of the Scribes & Phariſes, when they ſaid, *He hath an vncleane Spirit*, *Marke.* 3. 30. of a malice and hardneſſe of heart againſt their owne conſciences, and with a purpoſe neuer to beleeue in him whom God hath ſent to bee the onely meane of ſaluation, as S. *Peter* teſtified, *Act.* 4. 12.

The threat.

Vnto him that ſhall blaſpheme, it ſhal not be forgiuen. It ſhall not bee forgiuen, ſaith one: that is, it ſhall hardly be forgiuen; but this expoſition is very doubtfull: for if it be forgiuen, though hardly, it is forgiuen, and ſo is it a plaine contradictory to the words, *It ſhal not be forgiuen.* You will ſay perhaps, the Scripture ſaith, that there is no ſinne which by repentance may not bee forgiuen. I anſwere, it is true, and ſo ſhall this, but the reaſon why this ſhall not bee forgiuen, is, becauſe it can haue no repentance: for ſo the learned ſay, *Directe obuiat principio, per quod ſit re-*

miſſio peccatorũ, it is directly & plainly oppoſite and contrary vnto that whereby remiſſion of ſinnes is obtained, that is, vnto repentance, as hath been ſhewed: for he that committeth this ſinne, either in Apoſtacy, or Impiety, hee doth reſolutely renounce repentance, and is hardened in a purpoſe cleane contrary, that is, hee hath a heart ſo hard, that as Saint *Paul* ſaith, *Rom.* 2.5. *It cannot repent.*

You will ſay, though now it cannot, it may hereafter, for who knoweth. I anſwere, it is true, but therefore is this ſinne fearefull, becauſe it is of that nature, that vnto it repentance is not granted, ne can it be proued, either by example, that euer it was granted, or by any text or ſentence in Scripture, that it ſhall, or may be granted; and therefore it is a deſperate caſe, and hath with that other note afore mentioned, (an euill conſcience, that knoweth in it ſelfe that it offendeth of malice and obſtinacy, and hardneſſe of heart, and

and purpoſe neuer to repent of the deed done.) Ouer and beſide this, it hath alſo adioyned a horrible dread of vengeance, and a deſperate and comfortleſſe feare of cruell things to come. And this is the ſecond note of this ſinne, which is a true and inſeparable note and marke of it. This is that touch of conſcience which the wiſe man ſaith, *Wiſd.* 17.10. *Doth euer fore-caſt cruell things:* and that diſmall feare which hee ſaith, is nothing elſe but a betraying of the ſuccours which reaſon offereth, the author to the *Hebrewes* ſaith, *It is an expectation of Iudgement, and of hell fire to deuoure, Heb.* 10,27. This *Francis Spiera* ſeemed to haue, a man of late times, whom *Sleidon* in his Commentaries doth mention, who hauing abiured his faith and religion againſt his conſcience, felt ſuch a horrour and torment in his heart afterward, that hee could neuer conceiue any hope of mercy while hee liued, but cried out vnto his end, that he had ſinned againſt the Holy

The ſecõd note of this ſinne, the caſe of the patty that commits this ſinne.

Sleid. in Commentar. lib. 21.

Ghoſt, and was therefore perpetually damned. This hee hath that hath committed this ſinne, though not preſently, yet at one time or other afterward: for though it ſleepe, it will at length awake, and ſting him, as it did *Iudas* when he hanged himſelfe, *Math.* 27.5. And this hee that hath not, he that doth not feele, let him not doubt, or once thinke hee hath committed this ſinne: for together with the irremiſſibleneſſe of the ſinne, there is a touch and ſting in conſcience, alwayes of the condemnation to come. A deſperate touch I ſay, vnto horrour, not vnto conuerſion, as *Iudas* had: for as the ſin ſhall neuer be forgiuen, by Chriſts owne ſentence and words, ſo doth the conſcience feele all hope of forgiueneſſe loſt and gone, and now liueth deiect from his confidence; and looking after, and forecaſting with feare continually the miſery to come.

Vnto him that ſhall blaſpheme the Holy Ghoſt, it ſhall not be forgiuen. Out of which words wee may profitably enquire

enquire theſe things: Firſt, the diuers opinions of holy Writers concerning this ſinne. Seondly, how it commeth, by what degrees and meanes a man is brought by the Diuell to commit it. Thirdly, the ſignes of it. Fourthly, the meanes to auoide it. 1 2 3 4

THE FIRST POINT.

THe firſt point is the diuers opinions of holy Writers concerning this ſinne: Some ſay it is *Apoſtaſia aut negatio Chriſti*, Apoſtacy, or the denying of Chriſt. Some, *Finalis impenitentia*, finall impenitency. Some, *Quodlibet peccatum poſt baptiſmum commiſſum*, any ſinne committed after Baptiſme. Some, *Obduratio & obſtinatio in peccato*, hardneſſe in heart, and obſtinacy in ſinne, with a purpoſe neuer to repent againe. Some, deſpaire of Gods mercy, proceeding of malice, and not of ignorance, or of paſſion. Some, any deadly ſinne committed of malice, and *Stella in Luc. 12. 10.*

of purpoſe, with deliberation and aduiſement aforehand: And of this ſort there are ſixe kindes of ſinne, Preſumption, Deſperatioon, Obſtinacy, Impenitency, Impugning of a knowne truth, and enuy of the grace of God beſtowed vpon our brethren. The reaſon of this diuerſity of iudgement concerning this point, is double: Firſt, becauſe theſe ſinnes they vnderſtand to be committed againſt the holy Ghoſt, for that they are done contrary to the illumination and grace thereof: And ſecondly, becauſe they vnderſtand the words of Chriſt, *It ſhall not bee forgiuen*, not plainly, that it is irremiſſible at all, but that it is hardly remiſſible. And in this ſence it is true of all that haue beene named: they vnderſtand theſe ſins to bee committed againſt the holy Ghoſt, for that they are done contrary to the grace and illumination of it. *Chriſtus vocauit blaſphemiam qua opera & miracula diuina virtute facta tribuuntur ipſi Damoni*, Chriſt (ſaith one) hath called that blaſphemy

blaſphemy which doth attribute the workes and miracles of the Holy Ghoſt, to the power of the Diuell: and ſo conſequently, they are ſaid to blaſpheme the Holy Ghoſt, *qui contra proprium ſuum ſenſum eius donis & virtuti obtrectant*, who contrary to their owne knowledge and conſcience doe ſpeake euill of that which is done by his power and gift. For to deny that there is a Holy Ghoſt, or that the Holy Ghoſt is God, is not ſimply the blaſphemy againſt him here meant, if it bee done ignorantly, and not of malice: but if of knowledge wee oppoſe our ſelues againſt the grace and worke of the Spirit, our conſcience being witneſſe. This is it (ſay ſome) this oppugning of a knowne truth, which is the ſinne againſt the Holy Ghoſt. So ſaith Saint *Chryſoſtome* vpon the 12 of *Mathew*, of the Phariſes, whom Chriſt did conuince of blaſphemy againſt the Holy Ghoſt, ſaith hee: *Rem claram atque manifeſtam oppugnabant*, they did oppugne a truth cleare and ma-

nifeſt in their owne hearts. And as *Eraſmus* in *Mark.* 3. ſaith: *Nulla cœcitas inimedicabilior quam quum quis ſciens ac volens cœcus eſt*, there is no ſuch blindnes, as when one wil not ſee, no blindnes ſo deſperate, ſo inſanable as that is. Thus we ſee in mater of knowledge how ſome ſay, that to reſiſt a plaine and known truth reuealed in our hearts, it is to ſin againſt the holy Ghoſt, that is, againſt the light and illumination thereof. So likewiſe they ſay in matter of fact, when a man doth any thing which his conſcience doth tell him to bee ſinne before hee commit it, as it were maliciouſly, and for the nonce, not of infirmity, but of a very will, and of purpoſe: this they ſay is a ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt. Why? becauſe wee ſin againſt the light and knowledge in our hearts, which the Holy Ghoſt hath giuen vnto vs. So ſaith *Lumbard, lib. 2. Peccare in patrem, eſt peccare per infirmitatem: peccare in filium, peccare per ignorantiã: peccare in Spiritum Sanctum, peccare per induſtriam:*

To

To ſinne againſt the Father, it is to ſinne of infirmity; to ſinne againſt the Sonne, it is to ſin of ignorance; but to ſinne againſt the Holy Ghoſt, it is to ſinne of purpoſe. And this is the firſt reaſon why Writers haue ſaid, that Apoſtacy, and the deniall of a truth receiued and knowne, and euery enormious and great ſin committed after knowledge, all wilfull impenitency, and hardnes of heart in that wee know is euill, preſumption of mercy when wee doe wickedly, deſpaire, and voluntary declining from vertue to vice, obſtinacy againſt them that admoniſh vs, and ſhewe what wee ſhould repent, and doe to be ſaued, impugning that we know is true, and enuy of the grace of God giuen for the ſaluation of mankinde. All theſe (I ſay) are againſt the light and illumination of the Spirit; and therefore they that commit any one of theſe ſinnes, are ſaid to ſinne againſt the Holy Ghoſt. Neirher can this bee denied, but that euery ſinne committed of knowledge

ledge, either in denying the truth, or in walking contrary vnto it, it is a ſin more or leſſe againſt the holy Spirit which doth illuminate our mindes, but that it may be that ſin which our Sauiour Chriſt ſaith, ſhall not be remitted. It muſt be a denying of that truth which is ſo neceſſary, that without it we cannot be ſaued, or a notorious great offence which is mortall and deadly, and with malice and reproch, as it were, committed, ſuch as hath no purpoſe or poſſibility to repēt of it afterward: for this is meant by the word *Blaſphemy againſt the Holy Ghoſt*, which ſignifieth an vtter reproch and malice againſt the light and illumination therof, which may be done, not in word onely, but in heart alſo: for as the Scribes did blaſpheme Chriſt in their hearts, *Mark* 2.7. ſo no doubt doe they, who contrary to their conſciences, ſinne in the manner ſhewed. This is then the firſt cauſe of the diuerſity of opinions concerning the ſin of the Holy Ghoſt: they interpret all ſins

to

to be ſinnes againſt the Holy Ghoſt, which are done againſt the illumination of it in our hearts; which is true (as I haue ſaid) if it bee vnderſtood of that illumination without the which a man can by no meanes be ſaued, and with that reproch and malice, and hardneſſe of heart, and purpoſe neuer to repent againſt the Holy Ghoſt, which is called blaſphemy, as before was ſhewed: if an offence or ſinne (I ſay) be ſo done and committed, we think verily it is that ſin, euen the blaſphemy of the Holy Ghoſt, and not otherwiſe.

The ſecond reaſon of the diuerſity of iudgement concerning this ſin, it is this; becauſe theſe words of Chriſt, touching the irremiſſiblenes of this ſin, are interpreted thus, that it ſhall hardly bee forgiuen; not that it ſhall not be forgiuen at all. *Peccatum in Spiritum ſanctum ita irremiſſibile dicitur, quod de difficili remittitur*, the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt (ſaith an ancient writer) is called irremiſſible, becauſe it is hardly remitted, *Lyra in 12. Mat.*

ted, not becauſe it can neuer bee remitted. And this is the reaſon why they ſay, that the ſinnes before rehearſed, Preſumption, Deſpaire, Obſtinacy, Impenitency, impugning of a knowne truth, enuy of the grace of God, are all ſins againſt the Holy Ghoſt; to wit, not becauſe they ſhal not bee forgiuen at all, but becauſe they ſhall hardly bee forgiuen: And the reaſon why they ſhall hardly bee forgiuen, *Lyra* ſaith is this, for that by theſe ſinnes, *remouetur ab homine principium per quod fit remiſſio peccatorum*, that which cauſeth the remiſſion of ſinnes is letted, *& hoc contingit tripliciter, ex parte ipſius Dei, ex parte donorum Dei, ex parte peccati:* And this (ſaith hee) is three wayes: Firſt, in reſpect of God: ſecondly, in reſpect of his gifts: and thirdly in reſpect of the ſinne it ſelfe. In reſpect of God, that which cauſeth remiſſion of ſinnes is firſt the mercy of God, and this is letted by deſpaire; and ſecondly, the feare of God, and this is letted by preſumption. In reſpect of the

the gifts of God, that which makes men to forsake sinne, is the knowledge of the truth, which is letted by impugning that is knowne against conscience, and the grace of God bestowed vpon men for the saluation of his Church; and this is letted by enuy of the grace of God, of his gifts bestowed in the world. In respect of the sinne it selfe, that which makes a man to leaue sin, and turne to God, it is the vnlawfulnesse and shame of it, (which is letted by finall impenitẽcy; that is, when a man doth purpose neuer to leaue his sinne, that he would not that God should giue him the grace to leaue it) and the consideration of the vaine and short delight of it, which is letted by obstinacy, when a man doth so harden his heart, that hee will by no meanes forsake his sinne.

We see then the cause why Interpreters haue said, that these sins are sinnes against the Holy Ghost: it is because these are hardly forgiuen, not because they shall not at all bee forgiuen.

Calu.in Harm.in Math.12.

forgiuen. But as one ſaith well, *Apertiora ſunt verba, quam vt ita eludi poſſunt*, the words are more plaine then that they ſhould bee ſo vnderſtood; neither is there any place in Scripture which may giue any probability to this interpretation, wherein there is hope of forgiuenes giuen to him that ſhall commit this ſin: and the Author to the *Hebrewes*, who telles vs of a ſin which cannot be renewed by repentance, 6.4. And Saint *Iohn*, who ſpeaketh of a ſin vnto death, not to be prayed for, 1. *Iohn* 5.16. Theſe (I ſay) doe ſhewe that there is a ſinne irremiſſible: and ſo conſequently that theſe words are ſo to be vnderſtood, that it ſhall not be forgiuen at all; to wit, this ſinne of blaſphemy againſt the Holy Ghoſt, it ſhall not be forgiuen: not that it is irremiſſible, *ex ſe*, and *ſua natura*, of it ſelfe, and his owne nature: for there is no ſinne which may not bee pardoned to him that repents; but it is irremiſſible, *de facto*, inaſmuch as no man hath, or ſhall, or can haue grace

grace to repent, that hath, or doth, or ſhall commit it: and ſo conſequently it ſhall neuer be forgiuen indeed. Theſe ſins therfore which haue been named, none of them can be this ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, if they either haue been forgiuen at any time, or may bee forgiuen, whether it bee Apoſtacy, or deniall of Chriſt againſt conſcience, that is, the impugning of a knowne truth, which no doubt hath beene pardoned to many, that haue againſt their conſcience denied the truth, and forthwith after haue repented, and ſuffered martyrdome for the ſame. Or whether it bee preſumption of the grace of God after knowledge receiued: for ſo no doubt *Salomon* and *Dauid* ſinned, preſuming vpon hope of mercy afterward. Or whether it bee enuy of the grace of God beſtowed vpon others, which may be thought to be the fault of *Ioſuah*, 11. 29. and of the Diſciples, *Luke* 9. 49. As for deſpaire, it may bee thought to bee rather an effect and note of the ſin againſt

gainſt the Holy Ghoſt, as hath been ſhewed before, rather then that very ſin, and ſo the Authour to the *Hebrewes* ſeemeth to teach likewiſe, as may appeare, *Heb.* 10. 26. The like we ſay of finall impenitency, that it is a conſequent of the ſin, not the ſin it ſelfe: for that cannot bee vntill death; but the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt may be before death: for ſo the Euangeliſt ſheweth, that our Sauiour Chriſt did reproue the Phariſes for it, *Mark.* 3. 30. as they that had committed that ſin while they liued. What is it then? I anſwere, wee haue before ſhewed; but briefly this: It is not onely an Apoſtacy, or deniall of the truth known againſt conſcience, or an obſtinacy in ſin, but with that malice & purpoſe neuer to repent of it, that it neuer can repēt, or be forgiuen: this is that which the Apoſtle calleth, *a reprobate minde*, *Rom.* 1. 28. and that which is meant, *Acts* 28. 27. where it is ſaid: *The heart of this people is waxed fat, and their eares are dull of hearing, and with their eyes haue they winked;*

winked, leaſt they ſhould ſee with their eyes, and heare with their eares, and vnderſtand with their hearts, and ſhould returne, that I might heale them.

Here firſt note, that it is hard, yea almoſt impoſſible for any man to know who doth ſinne this ſinne, becauſe he knoweth not the heart, and if he did know the heart, he knowes not certainely the heigth of malice and obſtinacy, and hardnes of heart, which is required vnto it: So ſaith one: *Obſeruandum quod licet huiuſmodi blaſphemia poſſit dici peccatum in ſpiritum ſanctum, tamen requiritur certa aliqua obduratio & obſtinatio animi, & tanta propenſio ad infirmandam & euertendam gloriam & claritatem diuinam, vt non facile mortalium aliquis explicare queat, quando quis peccat in ſpiritum ſanctum.* We muſt (ſaith he) obſerue, that though there is a blaſphemy which may be called the blaſphemy againſt the holy Ghoſt, notwithſtanding there is required a certaine obſtinacy and hardening of the minde, and ſuch and ſo great an inclination *Gualter in Math. 12.*

to weaken and ouerthrow the glory and cleareneſſe of the illumination of the Spirit, that no mortall creature can ſay certainly when any man ſinneth againſt the Holy Ghoſt.

Secondly, wee here note, that all theſe ſinnes named, Preſumption of the grace of God, deſpaire, obſtinacy, and hardneſſe of heart, impenitency, impugning of the knowne truth, and enuy of the grace of God giuen to the brethren: all theſe ſins I ſay are grieuous, and (as one ſaith) *Aduerſantur bonitati ſpiritus ſancti, & ex diametro oppugnant principio ſiue diſpoſitionibus iuſtificationis noſtræ*; they are contrary to the goodneſſe of the Holy Ghoſt, and moſt repugnant to the cauſe and meanes whereby wee come to bee iuſtified before God: Wee ſhould therefore take heede of theſe with all diligence, both in reſpect that ſome haue thought, and doe thinke, that theſe are ſinnes againſt the Holy Ghoſt, the nature whereof is moſt horrible and hideous, as alſo in reſpect that in their owne

owne nature, and in truth they are very euill, and moſt hardly forgiuen.

The Second Point.

THe ſecond point is this, How this ſinne commeth, by what degrees and means a man is brought by the Diuell to commit it, whereto I anſwere, that theſe are the ſteppes and ſtaires of it: Firſt, reſiſting of the holy motions and light of the Spirit within vs. Secondly, caſting feare out of our hearts. Thirdly, long vſe and cuſtome in ſinne. Fourthly, ſelfe conceit, and loue of it owne opinion, and vaine-glory. Fifthly, loue of the world more then God. Sixthly, the impotency of the minde, vnable to reſiſt the pleaſures of ſinne. Laſtly, feare of perſecution. Theſe are the cauſes of this great and monſtrous ſinne againſt the Holy Ghoſt.

For the firſt, the reſiſting of the holy motions and light of the Spirit within vs: for certaine it is, the moſt

wicked that is hath in him many inſpirations whereby hee is moued to follow that is good, according to the light and knowledge giuen; which inſpirations are of the Holy Ghoſt, who worketh in all, either to leaue them vnexcuſable, if they will not obey him, *Rom.* 1. 20. or if they will obey him, to ſanctifie and ſaue them: for it is certaine God, euen this ſpirit that ſanctifieth, forſaketh none till he be firſt forſaken: for if when hee giueth light & knowledge in the minde, and moueth to follow it, wee will not follow it, no maruell though hee forſake vs: For as the Prophet ſaith, 2. *Chro.* 15. 2. *If ye forſake him, hee will forſake you*: and ſo when he hath forſaken and giuen vs vp, wee fall then, as the Pſalmiſt ſaith, 69. 27. from one wickedneſſe to another, till wee come to the heigth of all, to the greateſt, euen to this ſin, the ſin of the Holy Ghoſt: therefore ſaith one: *Qui peccat contra conſcientiam, ædificat in inferno*, hee that ſinneth againſt conſcience, hee buildeth

buildeth in hell, that is, he treads the firſt ſtep and ſtaire vnto it.

A ſecond is this, the caſting of feare out of our hearts: for though the other bee bad, this is worſe; for albeit a man ſin againſt conſcience, and neglect or reſiſt, and do contrary to the good motion of the ſpirit in his minde, yet afterward when he doth conſider what he hath done, or is told of it, as *Dauid* was when he had committed adultery with *Berſheba*, 2. *Sam.* 12. 7. hee may bee touched with feare, and repent, as *Dauid* did: But when a man hath done wickedly, and doth conſider and remember the ſame, and the iudgements of God due vnto it, and is not afraid, but hardeneth his heart, and caſts off feare vtterly, ſaying in himſelfe as *Peter* ſpake to Chriſt in another ſence, *Math.* 16. 22. *This ſhall not be.* In ſuch a one I ſay, the plant of ſinne hath taken roote, ſo that it cannot be plucked out of him: and therefore as *Eccleſiaſt.* ſpeakes, 10. 14. *Hee ſhall powre out abhominations*

till at laſt hee bee deſtroyed: that is, till he come to the worſt abhomination of all other, to the higheſt and greateſt, which is, blaſphemy againſt the Holy Ghoſt.

The third ſteppe or ſtaire to this ſinne, it is long vſe and cuſtome in ſin, that is, a diſobeying and going contrary to the good motions of the ſpirit, to the light of it, and in hardening our ſelues to ſin ſecurely, and to feare nought: for the vſe and cuſtome of this doing makes our hearts inſenſible, and vnable to bee moued either with the good inſpirations of the ſpirit within vs, or by the preaching of the word of God, and good admonitions without vs: ſo that wee become like the high way, *Math.* 13 4. which by oft treading is hard and dry, and the ſeed which is ſowne vpon it, is loſt and periſheth, that is in a word, we become vncapable of grace, though it bee offered vntoour hearts, or of good councell, though it be giuen vs: for as the ſaying is, *Error eſt immedicabilis cum tranſit*

tranſit inhabitum & conſuetudinem, that errour or ſinne is immedicinable, or paſt remedy, which is vſed and accuſtomed: So ſpeaketh the Prophet *Ieremy*, 13. 23. *Can the Blacke-moore change his skin, or the Leopard his ſpots? then may yee alſo do good that are accuſtomed to do euill.*

The fourth ſtep and ſtaire of this ſinne, it is ſelfe conceit, and loue of it owne opinion, and vaine-glory: for when we loue our ſelues and our owne praiſe, and honour, and eſtimation in this world more then the truth whereby we are ſaued, which we ſhould acknowledge and not oppugne when it is ſhewed: when wee thus doe (I ſay) no maruell though wee be willingly blinde, euen in the cleare light, and againſt our conſciences diſſemble that wee know, bee it neuer ſo neceſſary or materiall vnto the ſauing of our ſoules: no maruell (I ſay) though wee thus doe, becauſe we will not looſe our æſtimation, or praiſe, or profit in the world, no not for the praiſe of God, not to

bee accepted and honoured of him, agreeable to that which is said of the Rulers, *Iohn.* 12. 43. *They loued the praise of men more then the praise of God:* and that which the Gospell doth record of the Scribes and Pharises, who of very enuy to maintaine their owne credite with the people, did oppugne the doctrine and miracles of *Iesus*, euen to the blaspheming of the Holy Ghost, to wit, against their consciences, and against that light and knowledge, and illumination of the spirit in their hearts, whereby they could not but thinke contrary to that they spake and did of very malice and set purpose against him.

The fifth steppe or staire to this sinne, the sinne of the Holy Ghost, it is the loue of the world, and of our owne pleasure and life, more then of God, 2. *Tim.* 3. 4. *Louers of pleasure more then of God:* for when we in our hearts preferre the world, and the glory of it aboue the profession of the faith and truth whereby we hope to be saued: this maketh vs in time of peace

peace to flatter, and to ſpeake that wee know is vntrue, euen againſt our conſcience, hauing mens perſons in admiration, becauſe of a vantage, *Iude* 16. that wee might ſo come to preferment, for the temptation wherewith Sathan tempted Chriſt is incident to euery one of vs, for that which the deuill ſhewed Chriſt, *viz.* the Kingdomes of the world, and the glory of them, it is in our heads and hearts, that is; we luſt after it, and conceiue hope to get it, and rather then faile, there are many who will fall downe and worſhip the deuil, *Math.* 4. 10. *viz.* Renounce the faith, and commit all prophaneſſe, rather I ſay then miſſe of it, and this makes them, euen againſt conſcience, to diſſemble and deny the truth, which otherwiſe they would confeſſe and embrace, therefore our Sauiour Chriſt ſaith that no man can come to him except he loue him more then all elſe, *Math.* 10. 37. and ſo conſequently he confeſſe the truth, and way to

him plainely without halting, what preiudice ſoeuer it be againſt him; ſo did not *Demas*, who for the loue of the world forſooke Saint *Paul*, and ſo conſequently the profeſſion of the true faith and religion whereby to be ſaued, 2. *Tim.* 4. 10. which hee ſhould hane preferred farre before it, as being farre more precious.

The ſixth ſteppe, or ſtaire, to this ſinne, it is impotency of minde, vnable to reſiſt the pleaſures of ſin: for there be many who are ſo ouercome with the pleaſure of ſin, that they can by no meanes refraine the ſame: So we reade of *Herod*, that notwithſtanding hee reuerenced *Iohn*, and heard him, yet when *Iohn* told him that hee might not haue his brothers wife, hee tooke ſuch pleaſure in her, that he could not refraine her. So did the yong man in the Goſpell take ſuch pleaſure in his couetouſneſſe, and riches, that when Chriſt bid him, *Sell all, and giue to the poore*, hee went away, but would not do it, *Math.* 19. 22. and *Eſau* in his gluttony

gluttony tooke ſuch delight that he would ratherlooſe his Birthright thē want a meſſe of pottage which hee deſired, *Heb.*12.16. The like might we ſay of the drunkard, of the proud perſon, of the opprobrious ſpeaker, and contentious liuer, they cannot forgoe the pleaſure they take in the ſinnes which they haue vſed, and wherein they haue bene accuſtomed from their youth, for as the ſaying is; *Difficile eſt animum mutare & quod penitus inſitum eſt in moribus id ſubito auellere:* It is hard to change that which men are inclined vnto, and wherein they haue long delighted; and hence it commeth, euen from this impotency of minde, which cannot rule it ſelfe, nor ouercome the pleaſure of ſinne, that they are deceiued with it, and hardened ſo in it, as the Author to the *Hebrewes* ſpeaketh 3.13. That as Saint *Peter* ſaith; *They cannot ceaſe to ſinne,* 2. Epiſt. 2. 14. and ſo conſequently giue thēſelues deſperately to follow it without repentance vnto the end.

The

The laſt ſtep, or ſtaire, vnto this ſin, the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, it is puſillanimity, or feare; which is the fainting of the heart, when it is vtterly diſcouraged to run the way of repentance, and faith, and of a godly life, which no man can, that reſolueth not to looſe all, and to ſuffer all that may happen, rather then to forſake the knowledge of the Goſpell of Chriſt, whereby hee doth hope to bee ſaued, and to turne backe againe to the filthineſſe of the world from the which hee had eſcaped, as Saint *Peter* ſpeaketh, 2. Epiſt. 2.26. And this is that whereat many ſtumble, and are offended; either the greatneſſe of the labour, which is all our life without wearineſſe, *Gal.* 6.9. or the difficulty of it, *Luke* 13.12. or finally, the ſtrength and multitude of enemies, *Epheſ.* 6.12. which are armed with exquiſite torments, to terrifie him that is not fully reſolued to go on, and not to turne backe for any cauſe, the want of which reſolution, and Chriſtian courage

courage, and fortitude, makes many retire and go backe, as the Diſciples did, *Iohn* 6. 66. Like the Iſraelites, who for feare of the *Cananites* Gyants in their ſight would haue gone backe to *Ægypt*, *Numb.* 24.4. And hence it commeth, euen of this puſillanimity and feare, that many caſt away their confidence, *Heb.* 10.35. and depart from righteouſneſſe vnto ſinne, *Eccle.* 26. 29. *And ſo giue themſelues thence-forth vnto wantonnes to worke all vncleaneſſe euen with greedineſſe. Epheſ.* 4. 19. that is, with malice and hardneſſe of heart, and a purpoſe neuer to repent, which is the heigth of ſinne paſt feeling, as Saint *Paul* ſaith in the place aforenamed, and all hope of grace, which is this ſin of blaſphemy againſt the Holy Ghoſt, as hath beene ſhewed, or at leaſt comes neere, and is very like vnto it; For as I haue ſaid, it is hard to iudge ſtrictly of it, or to ſay vndoubtedly, this, or that is this very ſinne againſt the Holy Ghoſt, the reaſon why, a holy Writer giueth to

be

be this. *Quod incertum eſt à quanta malitia procedere debeat vt bene ſciatur nullam eſſe illi veniam futuram*: It is vncertaine from how great malice a ſin ſhould proceed, that we ſhould dare to ſay, as no man can, that it is irremiſſible, and may haue no hope of remiſſion or pardon.

Here note that the beginning of this ſinne is to fall away from God, with full purpoſe of heart, not in part, but wholy, for any cauſe whatſoeuer, whether on the right hand, or on the left: for from this roote ſprings vtter Apoſtacy, and maine impiety, in the degrees and manner before declared, whence doth iſſue at length this moſt horrible ſinne of blaſphemy againſt the Holy Ghoſt; and therefore not without cauſe doth the Author to the *Hebrewes* ſo earneſtly admoniſh, ſaying; *cap.* 3. 12. *Take heed brethren, leaſt at any time there bee in any of you an euill heart, and vnfaithfull, to depart away from the liuing God*: For this it is the beginning not of ſtrife, as the Wiſe-man ſpeaketh,

keth, *Prou.* 17.14. but of ſin, which is as the opening of the waters, that is the giuing of way to all impieties and prophaneſſe, till at length a man come euen to this which is the greateſt, blaſphemy againſt the Holy Spirit, which ſhal neuer be forgiuen, *principio*, therefore *obſta*, take heed of this which is the beginning, that is, of a heart falling from God.

Secondly, wee note here that the regenerate man or woman, that is borne of God cannot ſinne this ſin; I meane not in reſpect of his nature and weakeneſſe, for who is free in this life from any ſinne, except God keepe him, as he ſaid of *Abimelech*, *Gen.* 20.6. *I kept thee that thou ſhouldeſt not ſinne againſt mee*; but *de facto*, the regenerate man ſinneth not this ſin, that is, there neuer did, nor neuer ſhall any regenerate commit it, the reaſon is, the plant of the feare of God, which the Spirit of God hath put in him, which plant cannot bee plucked vp, *Matth.* 15.13. Saint *Iohn* calleth it the ſeed of God, 1. *Ioh.* 3.9.

Whoſoeuer

Whosoeuer is borne of God sinneth not, for his seed remaineth in him, neither can hee sinne, because he is borne of God: Hee sinneth not, his meaning is, not that he is free from sinne, for he had said the contrary, 1. *Iohn* 1. 8. But hee sinneth not, that is; hee sinneth not this sinne which is vnto death, for so hee speaketh very plainly, 1. *Iohn* 5. 17. *All vnrighteousnesse is sin, but there is a sinne not vnto death: Wee know that whosoeuer is borne of God sinneth not,* (to wit in this kind) *but hee that is begotten of God, keepeth himselfe and the wicked toucheth him not.*

The Third Point.

THe third point is the signes of this sin against the Holy Ghost, which are these: First, contempt of knowledge; secondly, insensiblenesse in sinne; thirdly, contempt of feare; fourthly, contempt of the Ministery; fifthly, wilfull wresting of the Scriptures to maintaine our owne opinions, or euill doings; sixthly,

ſixthly, teaching of lies againſt the word of God, and common ſenſe expreſſely; laſtly, open and opprobrious reuiling and railing againſt them that be in dignity.

For the firſt, contempt of knowledge, as when wee regard not to know, but are willingly ignorant, or when we are taught, we contemne it, when wee regard not to know but are willingly ignorant; For *Ignorantia non excuſat niſi in quantum non eſt voluntaria*; Ignorance doth not excuſe but ſo farre forth as it is not voluntary, but if wee regard not knowledge this hath no excuſe, and it is a ſigne wee belong not to God; for as a good ſeruant, if hee know not his Maiſters will, hee will bee glad to learne it, but if he care not to learne it, it is a ſigne hee is not good; ſo the Elect of God, as many as are ignorant are willing to know, and they that are not willing, it is a ſigne they are not Elect; this indeed, to be willingly ignorant, and not to regard to know, doth ſhew that wee

are like them of whom Saint *Peter* ſpeaketh, 2. Epiſt: 2. 12. *They are led with ſenſuality as bruit beaſts, and made to be taken & deſtroyed*; that is, they are as they who haue no ſoules to ſaue, as they that are made for nothing but to take their paſtime in this world, and to minde onely the things thereof, this it is the loue of darkeneſſe more then of light, that is, of ignorance more thē of knowledge, which our Sauiour Chriſt ſaith is condemnation, *Iohn* 3.19. For this it is the quenching, or reſiſting, of that naturall light which is giuen of God, whereby we know that God is, and therefore ſhould glorifie him by ſeeking to know and to ſerue him, which when wee do not, ne regard to know, *God doth giue vs vp. Rom.* 1. 21.28. that is, hee doth forſake vs, Saint *Iude* ſaith of theſe kind of perſons, that *They corrupt themſelues in that which naturally they know, ver.* 10. and he crieth woe vnto them, ſignifying that they are in a very deſperate and ill caſe. The holy man *Iob*, ſeemeth

ſeemeth to intimate thus much, that this, the not deſiring of the knowledge of the waies of God, it is a companion of hell, for thus hee ſpeaketh, *Iob.* 21. 13. *They ſpend their daies in wealth, and on a ſodaine they goe downe to hell:* Who are they that do ſo, hee ſheweth in the next verſe 21. 14. *They that ſay vnto God, wee deſire not the knowledge of thy waies*; as who ſay, this the not deſiring of knowledge, it is a ſigne precedent of the puniſhment of hell ſubſequent vnto it, and ſo conſequently it is a ſigne of this irremiſſible ſinne, my meaning is, though it be not the ſame, yet it is as an adiunct, which doth ſometimes, though not alwaies go before it.

And as this is a ſigne, not to regard to know, ſo when wee are taught likewiſe to contemne it, it is a ſigne of this nature alſo, for wee ſhall find euen in the Elect vnregenerate, howſoeuer they may ſit in darkenes long, and bee ignorant for want of meanes to know, which is not al-

waies offered, but at ſome time or other, as it pleaſeth God, yet when they are taught, for the more part, they learne very ſoone and obey it: So it is *Pſal.* 18.44. *Aſſoone as they heare of mee they ſhall obey mee*: and *Iohn* 10.27. *My Sheepe heare my voice*; that is, they that belong to mee: *In auditu auris*, at the very hearing of my voice they are ſtirred vp, as if it were vniuerſally and vſually incident vnto them to do ſo; therefore it is ſaid, *Acts* 13.48. *That when the Gentiles heard the word of God they beleeued*, ὅσοι ἦσαν τεταγμένοι εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον. *as many as were ordained vnto eternall life*. The contempt therefore of the word of God when it is taught, is an argument that ſuch belong not vnto Chriſt, according to that of our Sauiour Chriſt, *Iohn* 10.26. *Yee beleeue not, becauſe yee are not of my ſheep*, And this is the reaſon vndoubtedly why our Sauiour Chriſt ſaid vnto his Diſciples, when hee ſent them forth to Preach, that they who did not receiue them euen at the firſt, nor heare their

their words, it ſhould *bee eaſier for Sodome and Gomorrah in the day of iudgement then for them*: Implying therein that ſuch did not belong vnto him as did refuſe to heare, as did contemne the Preaching of the word of God when it is offred vnto them; this wee ſpeake not generally but for the more part, and ſo conſequently we ſay, that the contempt of the word of God is a ſigne of this irremiſſible ſinne, the ſinne of the Holy Ghoſt, (into the which men come by degrees, as hath beene ſhewed) or if not of that, of ſomething equiuolent, of ſinne vnto death, of reprobation, and damnation euerlaſting.

The ſecond ſigne of this ſinne, it is inſenſiblenesſe in ſinne, I meane in any mortall or grieuous ſinne. For as the Apoſtle ſaith, 1. *Cor.* 6. 9. *Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor wantons, nor buggerers, nor theeues, nor couetous, nor drunkards, nor railers, nor extortioners, ſhall inherite the Kingdome of God*: And there-

fore when men offend in any of theſe kinds or ſuch like, and are ſo accuſtomed vnto them that they commit them without all conſcience or remorſe or feeling, as if they were no ſinnes indeed: this it is *cauteriata conſcientia*, a cauterized conſcience, that is, a conſcience ſo hardened through vſe of ſinning and not repenting, that now it cannot repent. as Saint *Paul* ſaith, *Rom.* 2. 2. but is as a peece of fleſh which with oft handling is made paſt feeling: this inſenſibleneſſe in ſinne it is a fearefull token of finall impenitency, that is, that ſinne hath ſo got into a man, yea into his loines, that it will ſleepe with him in the duſt *Iob.* 20. 11. and ſo conſequently it is a ſigne of irremiſſibleneſſe, euen of this ſinne, the ſinne of the Holy Ghoſt, or the like, which ſhall not be forgiuen in this life.

The third ſigne of this ſinne, it is contempt of feare, that is, when a man is ſo ſecure and bold that whatſoeuer threatning or iudgement out of

of the booke of God bee thundred againſt him, hee is not moued at it, hee is not affraid, like that we reade in the 36 of *Ieremiah*, when *Baruch* had written a booke, at the mouth of *Ieremy*, wherein the iudgements of God were threatned againſt *Iudah*, the booke was read by *Iehudi* in the audience of the King, and of the Princes, and at the hearing of it the King was chafed, and threw the booke into the fire, but as it is there noted, they caſt off feare, and made no account of it, *Ier.*36.24. they were not affraid, nor rent their garments, neither the King nor any of his ſeruants that heard the wordes; contrary to that of *Ioſiah*: who though he were a King, and his heart no doubt ſtout, and voide of feare of any earthly thing, yet when hee had heard the booke of the Law, and the iudgements of it, *his heart did melt in him*, that is, he was exceedingly affraid of the ſame, 2.*King.* 22.19. For hee knew that if God were angry hee could not ſtand be-

fore him: This boldneſſe then and ſecurity, not to bee moued with the iudgements of God, bee they neuer ſo terrible, or neuer ſo neere vs, becauſe of our ſinnes, the Wiſe Man ſaith it is a token of euill, *Prou.* 28. 14. yea of deſtruction, for ſo it is, *Eccle.* 3. 27. *Cor durum habebit malũ in nouiſſimo*, A hard heart ſhall feare euill at the laſt, and ſo conſequently this it is a ſigne of ſinne vnto death, of ſinne irremiſſible, euen the ſinne againſt the Holy Ghoſt, which ſhall not be forgiuen.

The fourth ſigne of this ſinne, it is contempt of the Miniſtery, which doth commonly follow the other: for when there is ſuch a ſecurity and hardneſſe of heart that nothing can moue it, no iudgement nor threat, there followeth a contempt of the Miniſtery, and no maruell, for if we feare not the word of God, nor his iudgement or threat, no maruell though we contemne the Miniſtery, and it be vile in our ſight, no maruell though wee count it an idle office, weake,

weake & of no value, of no account indeede, *Ezech.* the twentith, 48. they ſay of mee (ſaith the Prophet) doth not he ſpeake parables, that is, as one that babbleth things not to bee heeded, not to be regarded, *Acts* 17.18.

This contempt of the Miniſtery, it doth argue contempt euen of Chriſt himſelfe, *Luk.* 10. 16. and it is incurable: for what ſhould cure it, if it be contemned which ſhould cure all elſe? *If the ſalt be vnſauory, wherewith ſhall it be ſeaſoned?* *Mark.* 9.50. And if the Miniſtery bee contemned, and cannot ſeaſon, what ſhould ſeaſon? If there bee no other water but the water of *Iordan*, 2. *King.* 5. 10. which can cleanſe, if we diſdaine that, there is no hope of our cleanſing: and ſo conſequently the gappe is open to all ſin and vncleaneſſe, and though we offend neuer ſo, who ſhall rebuke vs? *Oſe.* 4.4. *Non arguatur vir*, let none reproue: *Populus enim tuus ſicut hi qui contradicunt Sacerdoti*, thy people are as they that rebuke the Prieſts,

Prieſts, or as they that contradict, & contemne, and make light of them, and of their words, when they are rebuked or reproued by them. This therefore as it is euill in it ſelfe, ſo are we in dãger through it, to fall into all euill, euen into the greateſt ſin and wickednes, and ſo conſequently it is a ſigne of this irremiſſible ſin, the ſin of the Holy Ghoſt, or of ſome ſuch like. As when one ſeeth a wilde Aſſe, *Ier.* 2.24. who cannot bee turned, run downe blind-fold, a ſteepe high place, wherein are many pittes miſchieuous and deadly, but one moſt great and deepe, it is a ſigne he will fall, if not into one, yet into another, and perhaps into the deepeſt.

The fifth ſigne of this ſinne, it is wreſting of the Scripture of purpoſe to maintaine our owne opinion and doings. 2.*Pet.* 3.16. Saint *Peter* tels vs, *that there are that peruert the Scriptures*, that is, that do wreſt them to their purpoſe from the right ſence euen willingly. As againe, there are that

that ſeeke out examples in the ſcripture to excuſe their wickednesse, the example of *Lot* for drunkennesse, of *Dauid* for adultery, of *Peter* for Apoſtacy, and ſuch like. *Eccleſ.* the thirty two, the eighteenth, *Peccator homo vitabit correptionẽ & ſecundũ voluntatem ſuam inueniet comparationem*, an vngodly man will not bee reformed, but can helpe himſelfe with the example of other in his purpoſe: or as ſome tranſlations haue it, will find out excuſes according to his will, or will make compariſon, that is, will compare himſelfe as not vnlike to this or that Saint, which did ſinne in like manner: this either in the former ſence to maintaine errour euen wittingly, or to encourage our ſelues in ſinne without purpoſe of amendmẽt, it is a peruerting or wreſting of Scripture, as S. *Peter* ſaith, πρὸς ἀπώλειαν, euen to our owne deſtruction: for when a man ſhall oppugne the truth whereby he muſt be ſaued of knowledge, and contrary the ſame, and raile vpon them that maintaine it, as

I greatly feare many learned Papists doe, such a one I say, *Indignum se indicat*, doth iudge himselfe vnworthy of euerulasting life, *Acts* 13. 46. And againe, when a man sinneth, and will not repent, nor turne, though he know it, or bee told of it, the Psalmist saith, 7. 13. God hath prepared for him, *vasa mortis*, the instruments of death, as if hell were ordained for such: *God shall wound* saith the Psalmist (yet more vehemently 68. 21) *the head of his enemies, and the hairy scalpe of such a one as goeth on still in his wickednesse*, whereby wee see what a deadly sin this is, how dangerous, how full of feare; and so consequently a signe of this irremissible sinne, the sinne against the Holy Ghost, if it bee not the very sinne it selfe.

The sixth signe of this sin, is teaching of lyes expressely against the word of God, and against common sence: for as hee whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God, *Iohn* 3. 34. that is, the truth: so hee that teacheth

teacheth lies is not of God, but of the Diuell, the father of lies. You will ſay, the beſt may erre through ignorance, and teach that is vntrue. I anſwere it is ſo; but no man ſhould teach that he knoweth to be vntrue, or doubteth for certaine true. In the eighteenth of *Deuteronomy* 20. God giues a very plaine caueat, ſaying: *The Prophet that ſhall preſume to ſpeake a word in my name which I haue not commanded him to ſpeake, the ſame Prophet ſhal dye*; ſignifying that there ſhould bee great heed taken what is ſaid or taught for true, and in the name of God, as his will and word: And if any offend herein, the offence is great, and deſerueth no leſſe puniſhment then death. Now God ſpeaketh not by viſions and reuelations, as in time paſt; but hee hath ſpoken by his owne Son, *Heb.* 1. 2. and by his Apoſtles, who were continually conuerſant with him: And therefore as *Origen in* 7. *Iſaiæ* ſaith; *Nullum verbum poſt verbum Prophetarum multoque minus poſt verbum*

bum Iesu Christi & Apostolorũ: seeing we haue now the writtẽ word of the Prophets, of Iesus Christ, & of the Apostles, there is nothing to be added. According to the word writtẽ, therefore which we call the word of God, must euery doctrine be tried, 1. *Pet.* 4. 11. whether it bee true or no: and if any man erre through ignorance, mistaking the sence of that word, we commend it not, ne do we condemne him for it: for hee may bee saued, as S. *Paul* seemeth to teach notwithstanding, as it were by the fire, 1. *Cor.* 3. 15. Wee leaue him therefore to the tryall, to him who seeth the heart, and shall iudge right in the day wherein euery worke shall bee made manifest: but this we confidently affirme, that whosoeuer they bee, that teach and maintaine lyes, not through ignorance, but against their owne conscience and knowledge through hypocrisie, that is, *Simulata sanctitate*, with a visour or shewe of holinesse: these teach *Doctrinam Demoniorum*, the doctrine of

of Diuels, for ſo Saint *Paul* calleth it, 1.*Tim*.4.2. and are louers of lies, and ſo conſequently on the Diuels ſide, and as we may well ſuſpect and feare, his children, his ſeruants; and becauſe in their mindes they doe not ſerue Chriſt, but the Diuell, maintaining error for what cauſe ſoeuer wittingly, they ſin as the Apoſtle ſaith, *Tit*.3.11. damned of their own ſelues, and what hope may they haue of mercy and forgiueneſſe who ſin ſo grieuouſly euen againſt conſcience, and purpoſe neuer to repent of it: this ſin therefore we feare is a ſin irremiſſible; euen the ſin againſt the Holy Choſt, when wee are ſo hardened in it that we are paſt feeling, and paſt repentance of it.

The conſideration whereof might be cauſe of great horrour vnto them who with ſhew of much knowledge and ſanctity maintaine the worſhiping of Images againſt the Scriptures expreſſely, and deny the Cup in the Euchariſt vnto the Laity, contrary to the forme of inſtitution, to the words

words of Christ in the Gospel, *Mat.* 26.27. *Drinke yee all of it*: that maintaine prayer in an vnknown tongue, which the holy Apostle forbiddeth, 1. *Cor.* 14.14. that teach besides the Scriptures, that the Pope is head of the Church, and that it is necessary so to beleeue vnto euery one that will be saued, which cānot be foūd either in the Creed, or in the Scriptures, or in the primitiue Church six hundred yeares after Christ: that say the written word of God is not sufficient vnto saluation, contrary vnto the witnesse it beareth of it selfe in many places thereof: and that Saints are to be inuocated, and prayers are to be made vnto them, in whom we are not to beleeue, contrary to the doctrine of S. *Paul*, *Rom.* 10.14. That teach Transubstantiation in the Sacrament, euen against common sence, which knoweth it to be otherwise. Finally, that teach the *Romane* Church to be the Catholike Church and none else, which is somewhat strange, that the Church of Christ, which

which is vniuerſall, and knowne, as the ancient Fathers ſay, by the Doctrine of Chriſt onely, ſhould bee knowne by the name of any place, or perſons, or ſucceſſion of Biſhops, what doctrine ſoeuer they profeſſe. Theſe, and many ſuch like lies they teach, which we cannot beleeue, except we ſhould not beleeue the Scriptures, which are a more ſure light vnto vs, as Saint *Peter* ſaith, 2. *Pet.* 1.19. And if we ſhould beleeue theſe, we are in danger to bee taught many moe by them, who would reigne as Lords ouer vs, 1. *Pet.* 3. 5. and haue dominion ouer our faith, 2. *Cor.* 1.24. And indeede the world may iudge what cauſe wee haue to ſubmit our ſoules to their ſubiection, in reſpect of their wholeſome and ſound doctrine, and holy and good life, who teach æquiuocation, and lyes, and periury, with a mentall reſeruation to bee lawfull, and practiſe ſtrange barbarous cruelties, erſt vnheard of.

The laſt ſigne of this ſinne, it is o-

pen and opprobrious reuiling and railing againſt them that bee in dignitiy: for railers the Apoſtle ſaith, *ſhall not inherit the kingdome of God*, 1. *Cor.*6.10. and to raile vpon a Ruler was a thing forbidden by God in the old Law. *Exod.*22.28. *Thou ſhalt not raile vpon the Iudges, nor ſpeake euill of the Ruler of thy people: For they execute not the iudgement of man, but of God*, as *Iehoſhaphat* ſpake, 2. *Chro.*19.6. And if they iudge not wel, a hard iudgment ſhall they haue themſelues, *Wiſd.6.* 5. But to raile or ſpeake euill of them before the multitude, who ſhould honour them, 1. *Pet.*2.17. this it is forbiddē by God; neither is it, ne can it bee in any caſe lawful, much more when they are dead, and cannot now defend or make anſwere for themſelues: this is moſt inhumane, and moſt barbarous, eſpecially againſt a King or Queene, againſt the chiefe Ruler, againſt him or her who is *caput populi*, the head of the people, the ſupreme Gouernour: this is one of thoſe ſins againſt the which *S. Peter* 2. *Epiſt.*

2. *Epiſt.* 3. 10. and *S. Iude* in his Epiſtle, 8. verſe, inueigh moſt ſharply, as a note of the vtmoſt impudency and improbity, eſpecially when it is done openly, and with ſlander, and malice, which can not bee hid nor couered, and opprobriouſly alſo; and by ſuch as would ſeeme Saints and holy perſons, Ieſuits, and followers of Ieſus. O God, what may bee ſaid, what can bee ſaid with words ſufficient to expreſſe this wickedneſſe: this ſin queſtionleſſe is mortal and immedicinable, according to that of *Eccleſiaſt.* 23. 15. *The man that is accuſtomed to opprobrious words, will neuer be reformed all the dayes of his life*; and ſo conſequently we iudge, that ſuch a one that commeth to this height of ſin & ſhameleſneſſe, that committeth this wickedneſſe, he is not of God, but of the Diuell; and it is to bee feared he ſinneth irremiſſibly: not that this ſin in his owne nature is the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, but that it is one of thoſe ſinnes which are adiuncts and

companions of it; into the which whoſo falleth, ſeldome or neuer doth hee riſe againe by repentance afterterward.

Here note, that wee doe not ſay, that theſe ſignes are all ſignes of infallibility, and of neceſſary conſequence, but of probability and likelihood, ſignes of terrour and dread onely, as may appeare by the ſeueral diſcourſe had of them in perticular: We ſay then of all them who offend in any of theſe kinds ſhewed, to wit, in contempt of knowledge, in inſenſenſibleneſſe of ſin, in contempt of feare, in contempt of the Miniſtery, in wilfull wreſting of the Scriptures to maintaine their own opinions, or euill doings, in teaching of lyes expreſſely againſt the word of God, and common ſence, in open and opprobrious reuiling & railing againſt them that bee in dignity: theſe all I ſay, that offend in theſe kindes, as hath beene ſhewed, *ſi non in ſpiritum ſanctum peccant, certe eam viam ingrediuntur qua ad peccatum & conuitium*

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in ſpiritum ſanctum peruenitur, if they ſinne not againſt the Holy Ghoſt in the very forme and nature of that ſin, they come very neere vnto it, and goe the way right that leades vnto that ſin, and therefore ſeldome or neuer are they (as wee haue declared) recouered by any meanes, or made to turne vnto God.

Secondly, we note that inaſmuch as no man can, ne is it meete any ſhould define ſtrictly, or bee able to ſay this or that is the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, no man I ſay, can ſay this, but God onely, who knoweth the heart. And againe, inaſmuch as wee haue ſhewed alſo that the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt is remiſſible, *ex ſe*, in his owne nature, and as in reſpect of it ſelfe remiſſible to him that repenteth, *licet de facto non remittetur*, though it ſhall not be forgiuē: for the words of Chriſt are true, *Vnto him that ſhal blaſpheme the holy Ghoſt, it ſhall not be forgiuen*, the reaſon is, becauſe it is vnpoſſible that hee that commits that ſin indeed, ſhould euer

repent afterward. We therfore d eny not repentance to any, though they haue ſinned neuer ſo grieuouſly, ne if they repent, remiſſion of ſinnes, which ſhall certainly follow it; yea we exhort all to repent with hope of remiſſion of ſin, be it neuer ſo great; but we warne all to repent betimes, when they may, leaſt vnawares they fall into this narrow pit, euen into this ſin which cannot bee repented of: and as one ſaith well, ſo we conclude this point with this word, or ſentence of admonition vnto all: *Animi reprobi & incurabilis nota eſt, ſi qui Dei verbum ſcientes volentes contemnunt oderunt perſequuntur & ſpiritui ſancto corda ipſorum illuminanti impiis reſiſtunt.* It is a note of a reprobate minde, incurable and paſt hope, if any wittingly & willingly contemne, hate and perſecute the word of God, and wickedly reſiſt the Holy Ghoſt, that doth enlighten their hearts: that is, wilfully goe on in ſinne, and notwithſtanding neglect the light and knowledge giuen them, not wil-

Gualter in Math. 12.

willing to repent when they know in themſelues they ſhould & ought, and are admoniſhed to repent and turne to God.

The Fovrth Point.

THe fourth point is the means to auoid this ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, whereto I anſwere, that the meanes are theſe: Firſt, a deſire of knowledge, euen of the knowledge whereby to be ſaued all our life. Secondly, repentance when we are reproued. Thirdly, we muſt take heed of wilfull ſinne. Fourthly, wee muſt be farre from pride, either towards God or man. And laſtly, wee muſt embrace humility.

For the firſt, which is a deſire of knowledge, euen of the knowledge whereby to be ſaued all our life: for there is a knowledge which is ſufficient to leaue vs without excuſe, but not to make vs able to reſiſt the luſts of the fleſh, ne to make vs wiſe vnto ſaluation: for naturally we all know

that God is, *Rom.* 1. 20. and that hee is to be worshipped and serued; but this naturall knowledge is weake, and the flesh mighty to preuaile against it: Euen as a little Boat which in the middest of the sea is ouer-turned by the waues thereof: or as a Candle in the night, which is put out with a stormy tempest: For if in the regenerate the spirit can hardly ouercome the flesh, notwithstanding the supernaturall light and illumination which God giueth into the heart, as may appeare, *Galath*, 5. 17. much lesse can the naturall knowledge of any man, bee hee neuer so wise, for that knowledge is weake and vncertaine, and vnable to direct vs in so dangerous a way as we are to walke through this world, ne can it strengthen vs, or arme, or defend vs sufficiently against the assaults of Sathan, the diffidence of the flesh, and the corrupt example of the world, and feares in it: This the wise man *Salomon*, euen the wisest of all other, Iesus Christ except, did acknowledge

ledge in himſelfe and therefore prayeth for a better light and guide then it, *Wiſd.*9.13.14.

Againe, the light of Nature is vncomfortable, and giueth little, or no hope at all of mercy, becauſe we all beare about with vs a loade of ſin, as Saint *Paul* faith, *Rom.* 7. and ſo conſequently a conſcience of ſinne, from the which we cannot be deliuered, but by the knowledge of Ieſus Chriſt, *Rom.*7,25. contained in the Scriptures, and therefore our Sauiour Chriſt bids vs, *Search the Scriptures if wee will come to eternall life. Iohn* 5.39. and the more wee ſearch and know, the more wiſe wee are, 2.*Tim.*3.15. and the better able to reſiſt ſinne, and to go the ſtraight way vnto heauen: For as one ſaith excellently well, *Tantum momenti habet ſcientia vt peccata non aliunde proficiſcantur quam ex falſis opinionibus*, Knowledge it is of ſuch vſe and efficacy, that ſinne it proceedes from no other cauſe but from ignorance & want of it, more or leſſe: *Quid eſt* (ſaith

Eraſ. in Ench.

(saith an ancient Father) *quod omnes homines ad peccandum instigat nisi ignorantia boni quod amittitur & mali quod incurritur*: What is it that makes all men bold to sinne but ignorance, euen the ignorance of the good they loose by it, and the ignorance of the euill they incur by it; for though they know by sinne they procure death vnto themselues, and loose the fauour of God, yet this knowledge is weake and imperfect in them, and mixed with ignorance in many points, they do not know it perfectly and fully indeed, for if they did they would not sinne, no not for a world, neither would they presume in hope to be forgiuen, as the most doe, when they might forbeare and not sinne at all, therefore the Apostle would haue vs rooted, and built, and stablished in knowledge and faith, *Colloss.* 2. 5. and that this may bee, there must bee a continuall desire and labour vnto it with care and painefulnesse, 2. *Esdras* 5. 34. which desire as it is more or lesse, so doth it

Bernard.

it ſhew we are more or leſſe perfect, our ſoules more or leſſe proſper and fare well, 2.*Iohn* 2. and are in better caſe, better proficients in the ſchoole of Chriſt, euen as the appetite or hunger of the body doth ſhew the better health of the body, and the ſtrength thereof. There is a knowledge which makes vs careleſſe of knowledge, and when we know little, wee thinke wee know all, wiſer then *Daniel*, and vnderſtand all ſecrets *Ezech.* 28.3. ſo that wee neede now no more an Inſtructour, it is the knowledge of many in the world now a daies; a knowledge that puffeth vp, a knowledge without grace, a knowledge, *Quæ non afficit ſed extollit nec lamentantes ſed ſuperbientes quos repleuerat facit*: A knowledge which doth not affect but lift vs vp, neither doth it make vs lament our ignorance and wants, but makes vs proud, and careleſſe, & this is the knowledge of the more part in theſe latter times, whence hath proceeded the contempt of the

Greg. in morali.

Preaching

Preaching of the word of God, and of the Preachers and Miniſtery it ſelfe, ſo great as neuer the like was; and this knowledge it hath bene the decay of true deuotion, and of the feare of God, and of loue and good doing, not that it is in it ſelfe the cauſe of theſe things, but by accident, and through the corruption of mens hearts, who haue not learned to vſe any good thing well, of this knowledge, I ſay therefore, that ignorance is better then it, more deuout, more full of feare, of reuerence to holy things, and more neere vnto God, and more capable of grace and ſaluation through Chriſt, of this therefore take thou heed.

The ſecond meanes to auoide this ſinne againſt the Holy Ghoſt, it is repentance when wee are reproued, for if when wee are reproued and told of our faultes, and know we haue offended, wee acknowledge the ſame, and repent forth-with, and do no more, if thus wee doe, I ſay, without vaine contradiction, *Pſal.* 55.9.

55.9, or excuſe, *Eccle.* 32.18. we ſhal eſcape wilfull ſinne, therefore *Eccleſiaſticus* ſaith, it is good to do ſo; yea not onely ſo, but how good is it? *Eccleſiaſt.* 20.4. *Quam bonum eſt correptum manifeſtare pœnitentiã ſic enim effugies voluntarium peccatum?* How good a thing is it when thou art reproued to ſhew repentance openly, for ſo ſhalt thou eſcape wilfull ſinne? This it requires; firſt, a willingneſſe to bee reproued; ſecondly, patience to beare it: A willingneſſe to bee reproued, for as a man if hee haue a ſecret or dangerous diſeaſe, or ſore, hee would bee willing to bee told of it, and to haue it launced or cured; ſo ſhould a man bee willing to bee told of his faults, to bee reproued, that he might know and amend them: So wee read of *Valentinian* a good Emperour, that hee vſed to ſay vnto Saint *Ambroſe*, *Feſtina ſanare vulnera animarum noſtrarum:* Make haſt, bee not ſlacke to heale the wounds of our ſoules; that is, to tell vs of our faultes: *Prou.* 19. *ver.* 25.

Si

Si corripueris ſapientem intelliget: *Rebuke a wiſe man and hee will vnderſtand:* that is, hee will bee willing to heare; yea, *hee will loue thee*, as it is, *Prou.*9.8. On the contrary, not to bee willing to bee reproued when cauſe is, the Wiſe Man ſaith it is to go out of the way, *Pro.*10.17.& *Eccleſiaſticus* ſaith it is *Veſtigium peccatoris*, a token of an vngodly perſon, *Eccl.*21.6.

Againe, as wee muſt bee willing to be reproued, ſo muſt we be patient to beare it; that is, though it bee ſharp,& do grieue vs, we muſt ſuffer it: So we reade *Dauid* did when *Nathan* rebuked him, though hee told him hee had committed a horrible fact, the hearing whereof no doubt did grieue him, yet hee was not offended with him, but ſaid againſt himſelfe, *Peccaui*, *I haue ſinned:* 2.*Sam.*12.13. Contrary to that of *Amaziah*, though otherwiſe a good King, who (when the Prophet reproued him) hee taunted him, and would not hearken vnto him, and

therefore

therefore the Prophet ſaid, *Hee knew God would deſtroy him*, 2. *Chro.* 25. 16. as it came to paſſe afterward; This patience to beare the reproofe is neceſſary, for otherwiſe the Wiſe Man ſaith, *Prou.* 29. 1. If a man will not beare it, but harden his heart, and rage againſt it: *Repentinus ei ſuperveniet interitus & eum ſanitas non ſequetur*: Hee ſhall ſuddenly be deſtroied and cannot bee cured; and this patience is ſeene in them who are in authority, when they can ſuffer their inferiours, eſpecially (them whom it doth concerne) the Miniſters of the Goſpell, to ſpeake their conſcience freely before them, and al-be-it they ſhould offend ſometimes either of raſhneſſe, or zeale, and in their opinion be indiſcreete and vnaduiſed, yet to beare with them rather then to ſeeme vnwilling to heare of their fault, or when they are reproued, impatient or diſpleaſed at it, as *Herod* was, whē *Iohn Baptiſt* told him plainely it was not lawfull for him to haue *Herodias* his brothers wife,

Math.

Math. 14.4. No doubt he thought it was a blunt reproofe in him (a rude fellow) vnto a King, and that hee ſhewed little diſcretion in it, and therefore he put him in priſon, and after beheaded him, but much better had it beene if hee had not beene offended, but had ſuffered him, I ſpeake not this to allow indiſcretion in inferiours, and leaſt of all in Miniſters, eſpecially vnto Kings, Gods Liefetenants, whom they are, if need be, each according to his place, and as occaſion ſhall bee giuen, to reproue, but with great warineſſe, and with modeſty, & with all care of the ſafety of their honor, & with as little offence as may be, but I ſpeake that which I iudge to be good and profitable, that ſuch as bee in authority ſhew alwaies a patient mind herein, that the good and diſcrete bee not diſcouraged to ſpeake freely before them, for otherwiſe hee that is in eminent dignity and ſupreme authority, if hee take offence when he is reproued, and be pleaſed onely when

when hee is praiſed, it is moſt certaine hee ſhall haue few ſo feruently affected, that to admoniſh him of his faultes, they will incurre the danger of his diſpleaſure and wrath, with the hazard of their owne hurt: it is therefore a thing vnprofitable euen to the greateſt to be vnwilling to heare of any fault, or to be impatient when they are admoniſhed to repent of it; and much more vnprofitable and farre leſſe beſeeming others, who are more inferiour, to offend in this kind, to want patience in this reſpect; the Wiſe Man therefore, that knew beſt the vſe and profite that commeth of this, exhorteth all vnto it as may appeare, *Prou.* 19.20. *Audi conſilium & ſuſcipe diſciplinam vt ſis ſapiens in nouiſſimis tuis: Ogiue eare vnto good counſell, and bee content to be reformed, that thou maiſt be wiſe in thy latter end.*

The third meanes to auoide this ſinne againſt the Holy Ghoſt it is this, to take heed of wilfull ſinne: For as one ſaith, *Nemo ſine vitijs naſci-*

tur optimus quiſq; minimis vrgetur: No man is voide of ſinne, but hee is beſt who hath the leaſt ſin: The Prophet *Dauid* therefore prayeth, ſaying; *Keepe thy ſeruant from preſumptuous ſinnes:* For as *Eccleſiaſticus* ſaith, 19.2. *Hee that ſinneth againſt his owne ſoule, vid:* againſt his knowledge wittingly & aduiſedly, *he ſhall repent it*; to wit, either in this life, bitterly, as Saint *Peter* did, *Math.* 26.75. or in the next, which is worſe; for as Diuines ſay with one conſent, if we ſinne wittingly in any grieuous manner, in any thing forbidden, and continue in it aduiſedly and wilfully, for what cauſe, or with what pretence, or preſumption ſoeuer; if thus wee doe (I ſay) it is a token wee are not of God, ne can wee haue any part in Chriſt, or be ſaued, if wee ſo continue without remorſe. *Manenti in peccato mortali non eſt reuerſio ad eccleſiam militantem:* So long as wee continue in any mortall ſinne, wee cannot belong to the Church of Chriſt. *Sancti & qui vera fide prediti*

Zanch. de perſeuer Sanct.

prediti ſunt non admittent peccata vaſtantia conſcientiam & multo minus in eis perſeuerant: The Saints and true faithfull people, ſinne not againſt conſcience, much leſſe do they continue in ſinne; and if they do ſo they are not Saints, ne doth ſaluation belong vnto them, ſo ſaith one; *Eorum non eſt ſalus quorum iniquitas perſeuerat*: They cannot be ſaued that ſinne purpoſely, and continue in the ſame impenitent. *Melanthon in locis communibus.*

This, to ſinne againſt conſcience, though it bee not the ſinne againſt the Holy Ghoſt, which our Sauiour Chriſt ſaith ſhall neuer bee forgiuen, yet it is a beginning, or entrance, by the which a man commeth to that, in time, if it bee not carefully preuented aforehand; the way therefore to preuent it, is to ſtop the beginning, that is, to do nothing againſt conſcience preſumptuouſly; This it was the wiſedome of the Prophet *Dauid*, as may appeare, *Pſal.* 19. 13, where hee prayeth ſaying: *Keepe thy ſeruant from preſumptuous*

tuous ſinnes, leaſt they get dominion ouer mee, that is; leaſt by degrees, by little and little, I fall ſo into ſin, that I cannot be recouered againe, into this irremiſſible ſinne, which doth ſo poſſeſſe the heart with prophaneneſſe and with a reprobate minde that it cannot repent; this indeed it is the head of that way which turneth either to life or death, for if a man haue a care according to the knowledge giuen him to walke, not ſinning againſt it, God will by his Spirit reueale more; yea, ſufficient vnto ſaluation, as hee did vnto *Cornelius*, *Acts* 10.4.5.6. If otherwiſe he walke frowardly, ſinning euen in that he knoweth, and do contrary he is vnworthy of more, and this is the reaſon why God with-draweth the grace of his Spirit, and the light and illumination thereof, according to that of Saint *Auguſtine*, *Sola ingratitudo eſt cauſa amiſſionis gratiæ:* Ingratitude, that is the abuſe of Gods grace granted, and giuen, is the alone cauſe of the loſſe, or want, of

of grace, through the default whereof the wicked periſh, and that worthily, it is therefore good for euery man that hath a ſoule to ſaue, to take heed how he doth wantonly abuſe the grace of God, neglecting the ſame, or reſiſting the light of it within him, and wittingly offending and ſinning againſt it, eſpecially let him beware how he doth continue in any ſinne, which hee knoweth, and hath committed, *Eccle.* 8. 3. *Ne permaneas in opere malo*: Stand in no euill; *Illud ſemper addo ne perſeueret voluntas in delictis contra conſcientiam*, this ſaith one, I repeate oft that no man continue willingly in ſinnes againſt conſcience, for if thus wee do, wee ſhall bee innocent from the great offence, as the Prophet *Dauid* ſaith, *Pſal.* 19. 13. yea, from much wickedneſſe, as ſome tranſlate it, or as the Latine is, *Immundabor à delicto maximo*: I ſhall bee innocent from the greateſt offence of all, that is, this ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt which is irremiſſi-

Melanct. in loc. com. de bonis oper.

ble, into the which otherwiſe wee are in danger to fall, or at the leaſt into the like, into a ſeparation from grace and ſaluation through Chriſt.

The meditation of this might well aſtoniſh all ſuch as profeſſe themſelues Chriſtians, and hope to bee ſaued, but notwithſtanding flatter themſelues in knowne ſinne and wickedneſſe, from the which they will not repent, whether they bee drunkards, or railers, or vniuſt perſons, or coueteous, or vſurers, or blaſphemers, and vſuall and common ſwearers by the ſacred name of God; theſe, and ſuch other like notorious and wilfull offenders, may well hope to bee forgiuen of God, but the word of God is exceeding ſharpe againſt them, *Deut.* 29. 20. And a holy Writer ſaith plainely againſt ſuch kind of perſons, on this manner, *Non conceditur ſalus per Chriſtum niſi his qui ex propria fragilitate cadunt in peccatum:* There is no ſaluation through Chriſt vnto any but

but vnto ſuch onely as ſin through frailty, or if they ſinne wittingly, or fall into any grieuous fault, *Gal.5.1.* They repent ſoone of it when they come to the ſerious conſideration and aduiſed remembrance of it, as Saint *Peter* did of whom it is ſaid, *Math.26.75.* that when hee remembred the words of Chriſt, and therewithall his ſinne committed, *Hee went forth and wept bitterly.* Otherwiſe if wee flatter our ſelues in our ſinnes, and harden our hearts in the ſame, and abide impenitent, delighting in wickedneſſe, in what kind ſo euer, either one or other, if we thus do (I ſay) God will not regard vs, ne heare vs when we pray vnto him, as may appeare by that of the Pſalmiſt, *Pſal.66.18.* *If* (ſaith he) *I encline vnto wickedneſſe in my heart, God will not heare mee:* And ſo conſequently wee are in danger to fall from one wickedneſſe and ſinne to another, till we come to the greateſt of all other, euen this which is irremiſſible, which ſhall not be forgiuen. It is

therefore good for vs to take heede how we ſinne wilfully, leaſt we fall, and our fall bee incurable in the end: Marke and conſider well, how vehemently a holy man ſpeaketh in this behalfe, *Eccleſiaſt.* 23.1.2.3. *O Lord & Gouernour of all my whole life, leaue me not, ne let mee fall, Who will correct my thought, and put the doctrine of wiſedome in my heart, that they may not ſpare mee in mine ignorance, nor let my faults paſſe, leaſt mine ignorances increaſe and my ſinnes abound to my deſtruction, and leaſt I fall before mine aduerſary, and mine enemies reioce ouer me, whoſe hope is farre from thy mercy.*

The fourth meanes to auoid this ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, it is this, to bee farre from pride, either towards God or man: for pride towards God is the cauſe of ſin, *Omnis peccator ſuperbus eſt faciens enim vetita diuina contemnit precepta*, euery ſinner is proud, for he contemnes the Commandement of God, and doth that which he forbids. It is a moſt true ſaying of ſuch ſinnes as are done

Bern. de mod. bene viuendi Serm. 16.

of

of knowledge, *cum ratione deliberante*, with aduiſement and deliberation and reaſon afore-hand: for then there is a contempt of the commandement of God, and a free choyce of the contrary, a voluntary and free leauing of the good for the euill, *Pro.* 2. 13. ſuch ſins therefore in the Law were called *Preſumptuous and proud ſinnes*, *Numb.* 15. 30. *Anima quæ per ſuperbiam aliquid commiſerit*, The ſoule that doth ought preſumptuouſly, or through pride. It may well bee called a preſumptuous pride, whē a man or woman that is but as a worme of the earth, ſhall purpoſly, and in pride of heart, ſin againſt the Lord, the mighty God, who is able at an inſtant to deſtroy him and all elſe, and to caſt body and ſoule into hell, I ſay vnto you ſaith Chriſt, feare him, *Luk.* 12. 5. and not to feare him, but to dare to prouoke him, as if a man were ſtronger then hee, 1. *Cor.* 10. 22. This is pride indeed, yea meere madneſſe rather: For as the Preacher ſaith, *Man cannot ſtriue with*

with him, Eccle. 6. 10. and as the holy man *Iob* ſaith, 31. 23. he cannot *eius pondus ferre*, beare his wrath or puniſhment, ſo may it bee ſaid much more, *Miſeret me tui qui tantum non hominem ſed Deum facis inimicum tibi*, It is a pittifull thing, that a wretched man ſhould bee ſo proud, ſo mad truely, that he ſhould willingly make not ſo mighty and great a man, but ſo great and mighty a God, his enemy, as it were of purpoſe, and for the nonce: it is the fooliſhneſſe of the wicked, which ſhewes that they are deſtitute of reaſon.

Wee muſt therefore take heed by all meanes, of this pride, and humble our ſoules vnder the mighty hand of God, as *S. Peter* ſpeaketh, 1. *Epiſt.* 5. 6. by chaſtiſement and taming of the body, 1. *Cor.* 9. 27. and by due conſideration of his greatneſſe, *Iob.* 23. 15 and weaning of our ſelues from her lawfull pleaſures ſometimes, *Pſal.* 131. 2. and ſuch like exerciſes: For as *Eccleſiaſt.* ſaith; 10. 13. *The beginning of mans pride is to fall away from*

God

God, and to turne his heart from his maker; For pride is the originall of ſinne, and he that hath it, ſhal powre out abhominations till at laſt he bee deſtroyed, as if he ſhould haue ſaid, the beginning of ſinne is of pride, and it is the cauſe of the greateſt ſin, euen till it ouerthrow vs vtterly, till it bring vs paſt all hope of repentance and forgiueneſſe.

Now as pride towards God makes vs not feare to ſin againſt him, ſo we can keepe it ſecrete in the deepe of our hearts: So pride towards man makes vs paſt all ſhame and reuerence, euen of the eyes and reſpect of men, like vnto that which is ſaid of the wicked Iudge, *Luke* 18.4. *Hee feared not God, ne reuerenced man.* This the Scripture calles a whores forehead, which is paſt ſhame, *Ier.* 3. *a*; *Confuſione confuſi non ſunt & erubeſcere neſcierunt, Ier.* 6. *d.* They are not aſhamed of ſhame, as they that are paſt all ſhame, or all regard of honeſty, and of good nurture: this it creepes vpon vs by degrees: Firſt, by pride.

pride againſt our equals. Secondly, againſt our ſuperiours, and them that bee in authority ouer vs. And laſtly, againſt the Prieſts, who watch for our ſoules, whom we ſhould honour and reuerence, and whom we contemne, and their words, though they bee the words of the holy one, euen of God the higheſt. *Impudentia & frontoſitas cum obduruerit vt non paueat, non horreat, non contremiſcat ea iam demum deſperatio eſt*, when a mans impudency and boldneſſe (ſaith one) is ſo hardened, that hee feares nothing, he trembles at nothing, there is no hope of him, hee is deſperate nought. Wee muſt therefore take heed of this; and that wee may take heed, wee muſt not practiſe or affect audaciouſneſſe, but the contrary; we muſt ſubmit our ſelues vnto all men, 1 *Pet.* 5. 5. eſpecially to our betters, to them that haue authority ouer vs, either in the Church or in the Common-wealth, 1. *Pet.* 2. 13. and as S. *Paul* ſaith, *Philip.* 4. 5. *Modeſtia veſtra nota ſit omnibus hominibus*, let your

Bern. de clam.

your modeſty bee knowne vnto all men; aſhamed both before God & man when we haue ſinned, & know that wee haue done any thing vnhoneſt, any thing vncomely, according to that which is *Ier.* 31. 19. *poſtquam oſtendiſti mihi, percuſſi femur meum confuſus ſum, & erubui*, after that I was inſtructed, I ſmote vpon my thigh, I was aſhamed, yea euen confounded.

The laſt meanes to auoid this ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, it is to embrace humility: for humility it is *fundamentū ſanctitatis*, the very foundation and cauſe of all ſanctity, it makes vs afraid to ſin. So *Eccleſiaſt.* ſaith, 2.18. *that they that are humble feare the Lord, and ſay on this wiſe; If wee doe not repent, we ſhall fall into the hands of God, and not of men.* It makes vs carefull not to giue offence vnto any, 1. *Cor.* 10. 32. ne to ſtriue either for place or for honour, or for vainglory with any, but rather to be content to bee as the meaneſt, as Chriſt hath giuē vs an example, *Luk.* 22. 26

Finally,

Finally, it makes vs ſubiect our ſelues vnto the will of God, to follow Chriſt, who hath gone before vs, bearing our croſſe, whatſoeuer it be, without diſcontent willingly. For as it is *Mat.* 10 24.25. *The Diſciple is not aboue his maiſter, nor the ſeruant aboue his Lord: it is enough that the Diſciple bee as his maiſter, and the ſeruant as his Lord.* Finally, it is ſo farre from ſinning againſt the Holy Choſt, or offering deſpite vnto the ſpirit of grace, that it is ready to dye, yea a thouſand deaths, rather then wittingly to offend againſt it, according to that of S. *Paul*, who cryes out with great vehemency and ardour ſaying, *Rom.* 8.35. *Who ſhall ſeparate vs from the loue of Chriſt? ſhall tribulation, or anguiſh, or famine, or nakedneſſe, or perill, or ſword? I am perſwaded* (ſaith hee) *that neither death nor life, nor Angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things preſent, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature ſhall be able to ſeparate vs from the loue of God, which is in Chriſt Ieſus our*

our Lord. Vnto this humility nothing is more contrary then the loue of the world, the pride of life, and the delicious pleaſures of it: for theſe do lift vp the minde fleſhly, and effeminate, and debilitate it, in ſuch ſort, that they make it vnable to beare the croſſe, to ſuffer loſſe, perſecution and death if need be: that precept therefore of the Apoſtle, 1. *Iohn* 2. 15. *Loue not the world*, is neceſſary: and in proſperity there is need of great wiſedome and ſpirituall diſcretion, that the fleſh ouercome not the ſpirit, and the loue of the world, the loue of God. And finally, the ſparing of the fleſh, *Mat.* 16. 22. the ardour of the ſpirit within vs.

Here note in what danger the world is of this great ſin, the ſin of the Holy Ghoſt, who are ſo far from theſe things, from theſe meanes whereby the ſame may be auoyded, ſo farre from deſire of knowledge: for alas they deſire it not, or if they deſire it, they deſire money more, and the things of this life, which is all

all one as if they did not desire it. *O ciues, ciues, quærenda pecunia, primũ virtus post nummos.* So farre from repentance when they are reproued, and know they haue sinned, that they goe on careleſſe, as if Heauen and Hell were but *Fabulæ aniles, & terriculamenta puerorum*, old wiues fables, very winde and talke, and it were a childiſh thing to feare the ſame. So farre from not ſinning againſt the conſcience, that they make no conſcience of any thing, but *melius peius proſit obſit nil faciunt niſi quod lubet*, whatſoeuer is ſaid out of the booke of God to teach them what is right, and what they ought to doe, they will do nothing but what they liſt themſelues. So farre from abhorring pride, that they count it ſimplicity to feare to offend either God or man, and exalt themſelues, ſinning ſecurely when no need is, when no aduantage is gotten by it, *Ac ſi ipſum peccare ſuaue eſſet*, as if it were ſweet to ſinne, euen without cauſe, and deſpiſing others in their hearts,

in

in reſpect of themſelues, as if in their owne might they could be ſtrong, 1. *Sam.* 2.9. as they cannot, but ſhall periſh as dung, *Zeph*, 1.17. *Centies milleſies*, as the Philoſopher ſaith, a hundred thouſand times worſe then the very beaſt. Finally, ſo farre from humility, that they thinke it very mæchiſhneſſe, and ſtriue euery one to preferre himſelfe before another, not in vertue, but in arrogancy, and worldly account, prouoking one another, and enuying one another, contrary to the Apoſtles counſell, *Gal.* 5.26. So that the world as Saint *Iohn* ſaith, 1. *Epiſt.* 5.19. *Lieth in wickedneſſe:* and as it was propheſied, 2. *Eſdr.* 8.10. *They walke in great pride*; and ſo conſequently abound in all manner of ſin and wickedneſſe in the higheſt degree of contempt, euen againſt the Holy Ghoſt, whoſe gifts were neuer more plentifully powred forth, nor the Goſpel more preached then now it is, to the deſtruction and iuſt condemnation, if not of all almoſt, as *Eſdras* in his time

thought, 2. *Esdr.* 10. 10. yet of the multitude and more part. It is therefore profitable not to fashion our selues according to this world, in the corrupt example thereof, as S. *Paul* counselleth, *Rom.* 12. 2. least wee bee condemned in the end with it, 1. *Cor* 11. 32.

Secondly, we here note that if we would auoid this great sin, the sin against the Holy Ghost, and so consequently keepe our selues that the wicked touch vs not, as S. *Iohn* speaketh, 1. *Iohn* 5. 18. wee must be diligent to vse, not one, but euery one of these meanes shewed: for the neglect of one of these may bring vs in danger of this sin; yea of one onely, if either wee bee careless of knowledge, or regard not to repent when we are admonished, and haue offended, or we care not to sin against cõscience, or to walke in pride, ne doe we desire to be humble: If I say, we fault in one of these, though not in all, *Eze.* 18. 10. 11. that one is dangerous: for that is one way which leads

to

to this great ſin, and ſo to deſtruction and hell: what is it the better if a man be free frō all diſeaſes but one, and that one be deadly? *Omnes affirmant non placere Deo penitentiam vnius peccati nec veram penitentiam eſſe vbi in alijs durat obſtinatio.* All affirme and conſent in this one thing, that the repentance of one ſin doth not pleaſe God, or that it is true repentance, when wee ſo repent of one, or moe ſins, that we are hardened in other: let therefore euery man take heede how he bleſſeth himſelfe in his own heart in any thing he knoweth to be euill, to bee vnlawfull, leaſt that one make all his labour loſt, all vaine and fruitleſſe elſe; and let him be diligent in euery good thing, that what is wanting any way, may rather bee of weakneſſe then of wil, let him deſire knowledge as ſiluer or gold, or pretious ſtones; yea the knowledge of Ieſus Chriſt, and of the way and meanes to be ſaued, much more, as S. *Paul* did, *Philip.* 3.8. Let him repent when he is admoniſhed, and feare the

vengeance and wrath of God (be he neuer ſo ſtout or great in the world, and among men) whoſe puniſhment no creature can beare. Let him not ſin againſt his cõſcience, leaſt he hurt himſelfe, and procure the loſſe of grace, and of the holy ſpirit, the loſſe whereof the gaine of all the world cannot recompence. Let him bee far from pride, becauſe God is enemy vnto it, and be humble as Chriſt was, delighting in it. So ſhall he be far frõ the danger of this ſin, or of any other which is mortal & deadly; & through the grace and ſpirit of God (which is louing and will not forſake him, if he do not purpoſly ſin againſt it, and with hardneſſe of heart continue to deſpite the light and illumination of it) he ſhall eſcape all perill of eternall deſtruction, and arriue ſafely at the bliſſefull hauen of eternall ſaluation, through Ieſus Chriſt our Lord.

The

The Conclusion.

THe ſumme of all that hath been ſpoken, is this, that wee take heed of that ſin which hath no forgiueneſſe in this life, and whereafter followeth nothing but an expectation of death and iudgement, and hell fire to deuoure: and if we wil take heed of it, and beware that wee abhorre the ſignes and tokens of it ſhewed, and the ſteps or degrees vnto it, deſcribed of vs, and follow after the meanes wherby we may be preſerued from it, and may be kept farre from the danger of it. *Eccleſ.* the twelfth chapter, verſe fifteenth, *Who will haue pitty of the charmer that is ſtinged of the ſerpent, or of all ſuch as come neere the beaſts?* to ſignifie that if wee will not be warned, to auoid the danger, if harme bee to vs. wee are worthy of it. Two things

there are which I commend vnto euery ſoule, as profitable for it: the one is feare, the other is faith. Feare to flye from ignorance, and to auoid from ſin, & from the ſnares of death, with all diligence, and might: And faith, if ſo we do, to be confident and bold, and not to be troubled for any cauſe, what tentation or doubt ſoeuer ariſe, or perill neuer ſo great. It was well anſwered of one, who being asked what was void of feare in this life, ſaid; *Bona conſcientia*, a good conſcience: for though a mortall man be ſubiect to many perils in this world, & after death to the feare of a iudgement, & of hell, yet *quò fata trahunt, virtus ſecura ſequetur*, whatſoeuer come, or is appointed of God, a vertuous minde ſhall ſuffer and endure without feare; not that any man ſhould truſt to his vertue, or innocency, or good doing, no not the beſt, but to Ieſus Chriſt alone, and to his innocency and righteouſneſſe; but hereby we know, and are aſſured that we are Chriſts, *If* (as the Apoſtle ſaith)

ſaith) *wee walke after the ſpirit, and not after the fleſh*: therefore S. *Iohn* ſaith; *If our heart condemne vs not* (to wit in this reſpect) *then haue wee boldneſſe with God*: yea ſuch boldneſſe as that no terrour can daunt, diſcourage, or diſmay vs. I commend therefore theſe two things to euery heart, the firſt is feare (as I ſaid) to auoid the dangers before mentioned, which are incident to all fleſh: and the ſecond confidence and boldneſſe in Chriſt, if we walke in the ſpirit, if we ſerue Chriſt in our mindes truely, without hypocriſie. Againe, I warne all men to take heede of two things, which are moſt perilous, the one is hardneſſe of heart, and the other is ſecurity, & vaine preſumption. Hardneſſe of heart, to be void of the feare of thoſe things, which are of all other moſt to be feared, that is, death, iudgement and hell: for he that feareth theſe things, is carefull to auoid the ſame; and hee that is negligent, goeth on, and is careleſſe, till hee fall into thē, without all remedy: there-

fore saith *Eccles.* 1.28. *Qui sine timore est, non poterit iustificari*, hee that is without feare cannot be iustified: for his wilfull rashnesse is his destruction, & he enwrappeth himselfe in sin, without remorse, without feeling, without feare what may follow after, what may come vnto him. *Impudentia & frontositas, cum obdurauerit vt non paueat, non horreat, non contremiscat, ea iam demum desperatio est*, saith a Father, when a man is so impudent, and his forehead so hard that he cannot feare, nor bee made afraid, nor tremble at the iudgements of God, which he doth not beleeue, which he doth not regard, his state is desperate; for he intangleth and wrappeth himselfe in sin, and cannot be reformed, ne will be taught, till he be destroied, and there bee no meanes of helpe. *Bern. de clam.*

Timor est custos officij, feare it makes a man diligent & carefull to doe well, to do as his duety is, as hee should; but where no feare is, what remaineth but a heaping of sin vpon sin, with a heart that cannot repent vnto

vnto the day of wrath, as S. *Paul* ſaith, and the declaration of the iuſt iudgement of God: it is therefore a neceſſary caueat vnto all fleſh which the Apoſtle giueth, ſaying; *Bee not high-minded, but feare*: And that of the Angell, who cryed with a loud voyce, *To euery nation, and kindred, and tongue* (in the Reuelation) *feare God*: And no leſſe neceſſary is it for euery man to take heed, how hee vainely preſume, and thinke all is well when he liueth in the fleſh, and not as he ought, for that confidence ſhall come to nought, ſhall deceiue him in the end, ne is there any Apology or defence againſt it; as may appeare by Chriſts owne words in the Goſpell, where he ſaith; That ſuch as haue beene workers of iniquity, what grace, or vertue, or ſhew of holineſſe ſoeuer, haue beene in them, it ſhall giue them no immunity or priuiledge from that direfull doome *Neſcio vos*; *I know yee not*, in the day of iudgement. *Cap.*14.6.7. Math.7.

Receiue then my counſell good brother

brother or ſiſter, whoſoeuer thou art that haſt a ſoule to ſaue, which Chriſt hath redeemed with his deereſt and moſt precious bloud, beware of hardneſſe of heart and irreuerence vnto the Scriptures and word of God, and to the holy Miniſtery, and ſincere and true and manifeſt Preaching and light thereof, and eſpecially vnto the ſecret inſpirations and illuminations and motions of the good Spirit of God, warning thee in thine owne conſcience, and in the ſecret of thy heart to refraine from euill, and to take heed now while time is; Beware of preſumption, and carnall ſecurity in ſin and in the delights thereof, beware how thou giueſt liberty to thine owne minde, and will, to æquiuocate and lie, to ſweare and forſweare, to deceiue and doe hurt, to liue in vncleaneſſe, to couet and get preferment and riches vniuſtly, and by wicked and vnlawfull meanes, to be mercileſſe and cruell to them that be in thy power, for any pretence or cauſe

cauſe to murder; to contemne Rulers, and blaſpheme and raile and ſpeake euill without reſpect of truth, or ſhame, as if thou hadſt gotten Sanctuary, or hadſt receiued a diſpenſation from God to doe what thou liſteſt, and to be ſafe and without feare of a iudgement, of a condemnation to come, though thou do contrary to the Scriptures, to the Word of God, to that he commandeth; Let not thine owne heart deceiue thee, to thinke God will accept thee, if againſt thy conſcience thou ſinne, and do the thing that hee hateth, and delight in it, with a purpoſe not to repent, not to ceaſe from it: Let not the Pope, or any earthly creature, (were he a chiefe Apoſtle of Chriſt, as Saint *Paul*, or Saint *Peter* was) perſwade thee he can bleſſe, or abſolue thee, though thou commit any wickednesſe, be it neuer ſo hideous, neuer ſo deteſtable: For certaine it is, to him that feareth God and departeth from euill ſhall bee mercy and ſaluation through Chriſt.

the

the word of God ſaith it. and whoſoeuer ſaith contrary ſhall bee found a lyar; and againe, to him that preſumeth of mercy, notwithſtanding hee doth wickedly, ſhall bee iudgement and wrath, if hee repent not; and they that flatter him and promiſe him peace in the name of Chriſt, as his Miniſters, ſhall bee no other but deceiuers, and accurſed in his ſight, who ſeeth and will iudge right, and will puniſh in the day of iudgemẽt, as wel the deceiuer, as him that is deceiued. Two kind of people there are, for both which my ſoule ſhall mourne in ſecret, and mine eyes ſhall drop downe teares, as being both paſt hope euer to bee reformed; The one is the carnall Proteſtant, the other is the ſelfe-conceited Papiſt; the one truſteth in a faith which is voide of good doing, ſaith he is in the light, and walketh in darkeneſſe; the other thinketh it lawfull to doe as the Pope bids him, though he kill and deſtroy that which God hath made, and blaſpheme

blaſpheme them whom God hath honoured, both theſe are made without feare: The one becauſe hee is ſure to bee ſaued, how euer hee liueth; the other becauſe the Pope is his friend, his helpe, his God: O curſed be hee that truſteth to ſo weake a ſtay, but much more that truſteth to him, forſaking the Commandement of God for his ſake, and calling good euill, and euill good, light darkeneſſe, and darkeneſſe light; confounding all order and truth, and turning all topſie-turuy to maintaine that which the *pope* doth allow, as if there were no other God but he, or as if God aboue would change his Lawes at his will, and for the loue he beareth him be contrary vnto himſelfe; From both theſe, my brother or ſiſter, ſeparate thy ſelfe, and as thou loueſt thy ſoule, let their counſell bee farre from thee, encline thou I beſeech thee to the feare of the Lord, in thy heart, in ſuch ſort that for the whole world, thou woldſt not do the thing thou know-

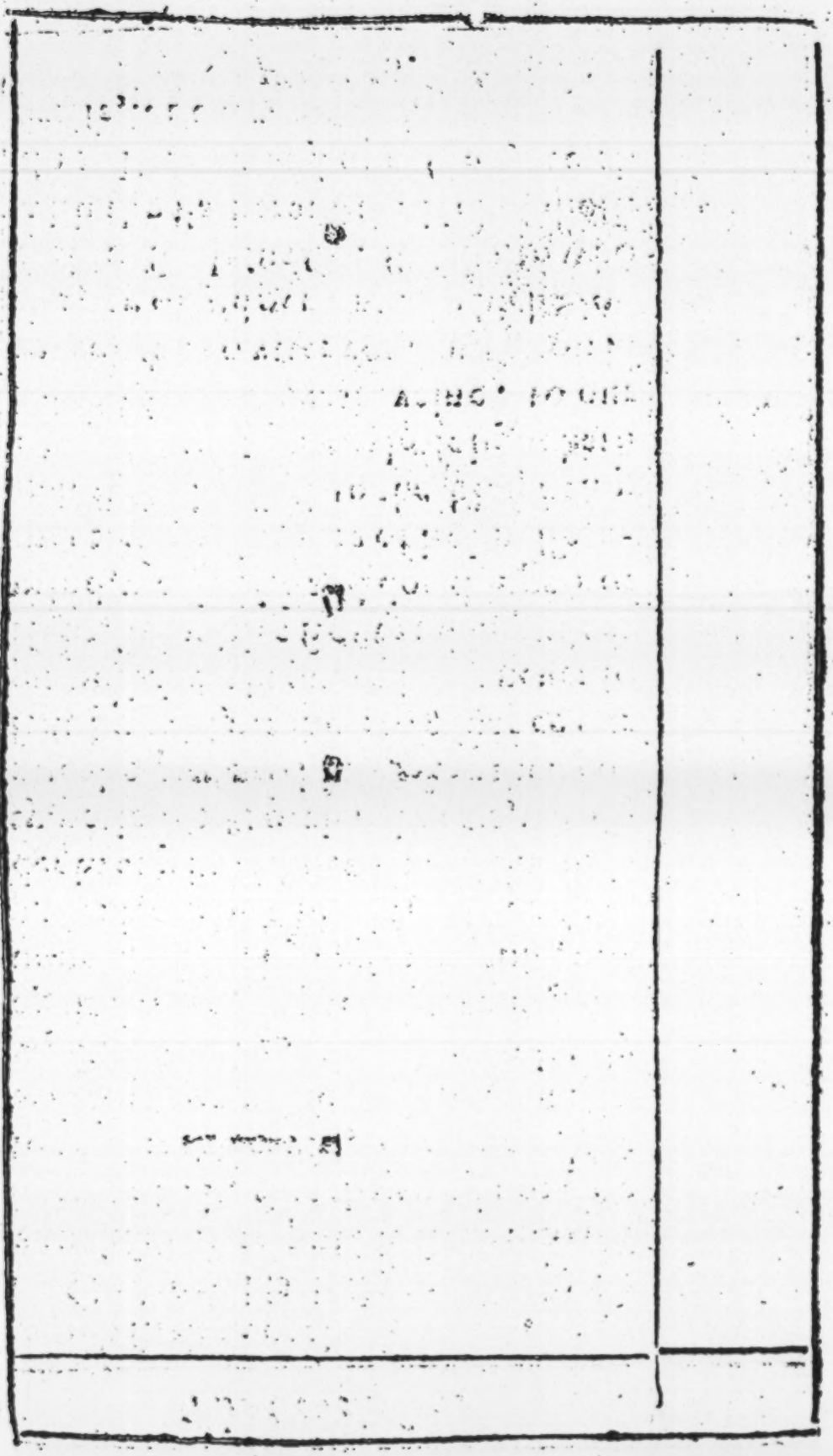
eſt

eſt to bee euill. Though thy infirmity bee great, caſt not off feare, but pray vnto the Lord continually to forgiue thy ſinnes, and neuer giue liberty to thy will, to ſinne wilfully in any kind, much leſſe to cõmit that is horrible & execrable euen to nature it ſelfe; to lie, and ſlander, & raile, and blaſpheme, and kill euen Princes, and that treacherouſly, and cowardly, and with deceite, when they truſt thee, when they ſuſpect no manner of harme, or euill meaning in thee, againſt conſcience, for thy luſt and wils ſake, or for their ſakes, who doe inſtigate and prouoke thee, and eſpecially abhorre to maintaine theſe things as lawfull and good, which euen Heathen, and naturall men would condemne, as moſt wicked; Beware I ſay of theſe things, of the baſe inclination of thy minde, or conſent vnto them, for theſe are ſo abhominable and euill, that (as hath bene ſhewed) they bring vpon thee a danger of the greateſt ſinne, euen of this blaſphemy againſt the Spirit, which

which ſhall neuer be forgiuen.

God of his infinite goodneſſe vouchſafe ſo to put his feare into the hearts of all, that they may not dare for any mans cauſe, or any worldly reſpect, or vaine ſeducements of wicked Spirits, to ſinne willingly againſt him, eſpecially in any grieuous manner, by any execrable, impudent, or abhominable fact, or murder in any kind, but that with humility, patience, & praier alwaies, we cõmit the cauſe to him, rather then cõſent by euill meanes: to aduance our purpoſe, be it in our opinion neuer ſo right, leſt with a ſtout and impudent mind, we ſpeake and doe things not meet, with pretence of holineſſe, againſt the Holieſt, to the blaſphemy of the ſacred Spirit, whoſe light hath ſhined in our hearts in vaine, to our reproofe and vtter condemnation in the day of iudgement, which God forbid, for Ieſus Chriſts ſake, to whõ with the Father and the Holy Ghoſt, three Perſons and one God, bee all praiſe, for euer. *Amen.*

FINIS.



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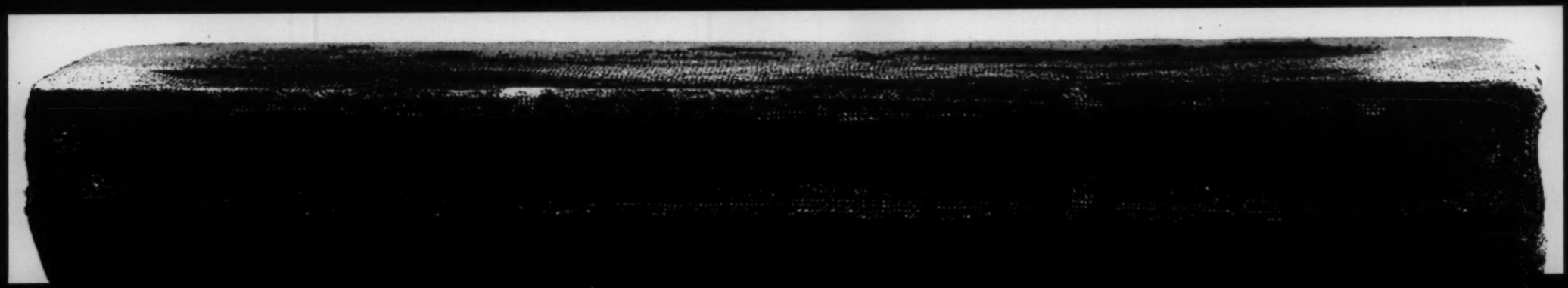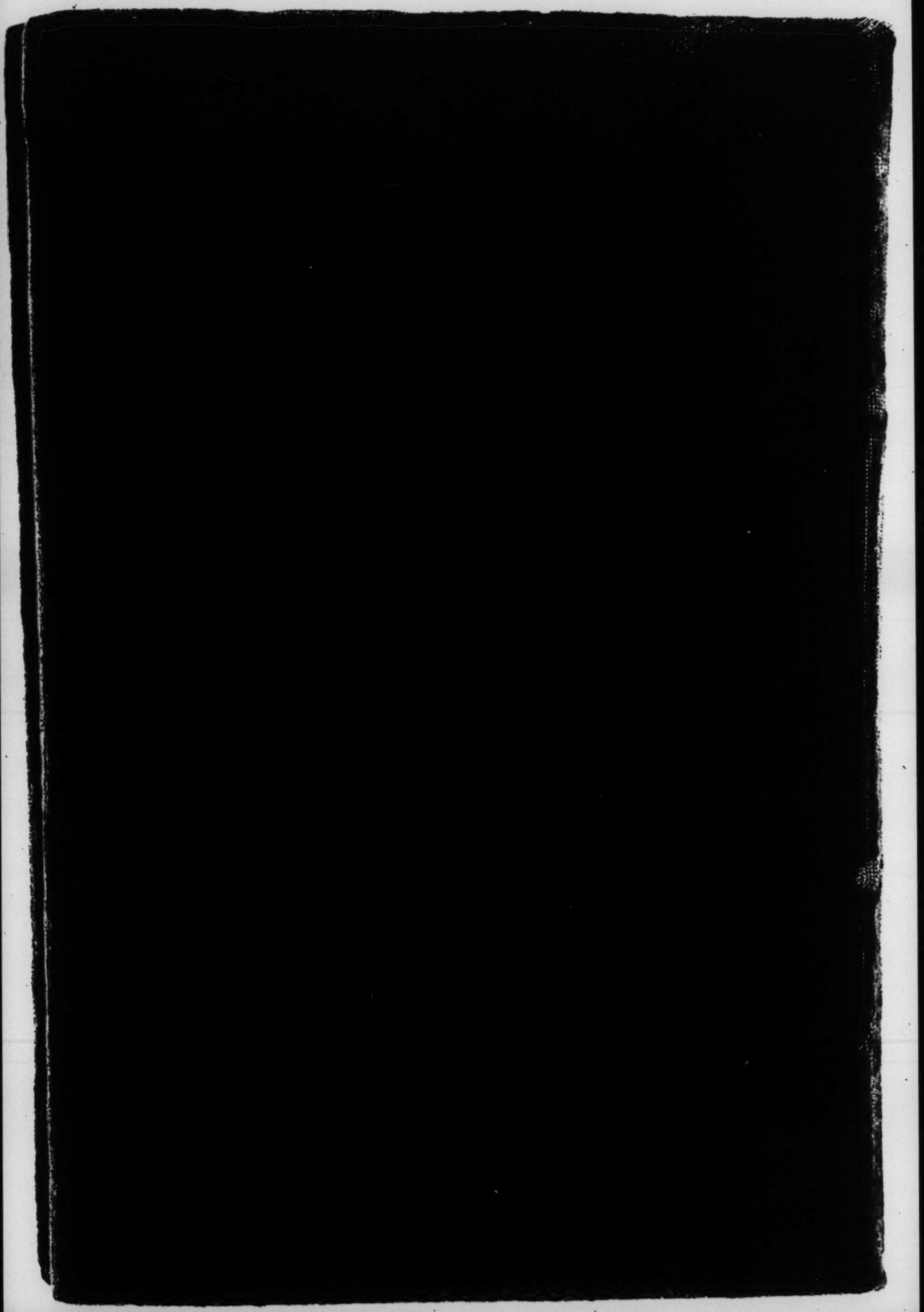
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